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GENERAL HISTORY OF ROME

FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE CITY

TO THE FALL OF AUGUSTULUS

B.C. 753—A.D. 476

BY

CHARLES MERIVALE, D.D.

DEAN OF ELY

‘Historia scribitur ad narrandum non ad probandum’

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PREFACE.

THE Breviary or Compendium of Roman affairs by Eutropius extends from the foundation of Rome to the reign of Jovian, in the year of the city 1117, as commonly reckoned, or A.D. 364. The summary which is now offered to the reader reaches more than a century further, and terminates A.U.C. 1229, A.D. 476. This, it will be allowed, is a long period to embrace within the limits of a single volume, to which it seems convenient to confine it. It will be well to preface the work with a few words in explanation of its object and its method.

The title of a General History is given to this book, first, because it is addressed to no special class of readers, but rather to the reading public in general, who may desire to be informed of the most noted incidents in the Roman annals, the most remarkable characters which play their part upon the Roman stage, and the main course of events, together with their causes and consequences. With this object directly in view the writer has no occasion to load his pages with references, or justify his statements by notes and critical discussions, for which his prescribed limits would allow him no room. It is for the orator, says the great critic of antiquity, to argue and persuade; the historian may confine himself to narration. But in cutting myself off from the resource of notes and references, I must at the same time refrain

from disquisitions and speculations which cannot be conducted safely or fairly without them. These I must leave to the critical inquirer and the professed student; my pages are addressed, as I have said, to the general reader, who will be content to accept the conclusions which I present to him. In former works, which cover a large part of the course now before us, I have gone fully into the critical analysis of our historical authorities. In this shorter compendium I take the liberty of adopting the results at which I then arrived, and often of merely abridging my earlier narrative.¹

But this little work may also claim the title of General, inasmuch as it traverses the whole career of Roman history from the reputed foundation of the city to its capture by the Vandals, and the extinction of the Western Empire a few years later. Roman history travels through three principal stages, which it may be interesting to define more particularly.

1. The first of these may be designated as the ‘antiquarian.’ The reputed history of the great conquering people presents this striking peculiarity, that while it continues for several centuries to be merely legendary both in its main features and its details, it is found on examination to be curiously adjusted to the existence of many actual institutions. The institutions survived; it is certain that they must have had an historical origin; their origin appears to be accounted for by the narrative before us. It is the function of the antiquarian to trace these institutions to their real foundation, to distinguish between the accounts we can accept as historical, and those we are bound to reject as fictitious or imaginary; he must

¹ I beg to acknowledge my obligation to the proprietors of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* for the use they have allowed me to make of my article on ‘Roman History’ in that publication, and especially of the chapter on the history of ‘The City.’

collect, compare, and sift the authorities, full as they are of inconsistency and contradiction; he must analyse and criticize them at every step; and while he is obliged to advance many conjectures, he must explain the grounds on which he forms them, and show the means by which they may be defended. After all the critical labours of Niebuhr and his successors in the art of historical construction, we have really advanced but little beyond the rude destructive process of Perizonius and Beaufort; we have trampled upon a great deal which the earlier critics had upset before us, but we can hardly be said to have raised any substantial edifice in its place, since we have so generally agreed to reject as visionary the most brilliant theories of our great German master. The local discoveries of Mr. Parker have their historical value, inasmuch as they confirm the reputed sequence of events in various interesting particulars; but the inconsistencies of the narrative can still only be explained by referring them to legends and traditions of no historical character. For myself, I am constrained to admit that there is scarcely one particular of importance throughout three centuries of our pretended annals on the exact truth of which we can securely rely.

Nevertheless, the history of Rome must not be written without the relation of these particulars, as they have been handed down to us by the ancients. They were accepted as historical by the Romans themselves, and as so accepted they played their part in forming the character of the people, and even in directing its career. They sank deeply into the heart and moulded the genius of the Roman race. They constitute the basis of half the best Roman poetry, and swayed thereby the imagination of both conquerors and rulers. Virgil and Ovid more especially can be but half-understood by anyone who is not conversant with the poetic myths of Livy; the course

of Roman thought and action can be but imperfectly appreciated by those who are not aware how strongly they were influenced by the legends which taught the people that they were the favourites of the gods, and that this favour had been manifested to them on a hundred imaginary battle-fields. It is impossible, as I have said, to sift our early records critically in a work like the present; but it would be a great mistake to pass them over altogether. I have not disguised how little stress I lay upon them as historical documents; but my plain course was to relate the story which the Romans have themselves transmitted to us much as they would have themselves related it, for the sake of its antiquarian interest, while at the same time I do not fail to warn the reader of the insecurity of the ground over which it leads him.

2. The second period of the Roman history may be designated as the 'dramatic.' No other annals, it may be fairly said, either ancient or even modern, are so rich as these in the representation of human character. There is no personage of mark that comes across the stage, from the fifth to the ninth century of Rome, who does not leave a distinct personal impression on our recollection. From the Scipios to M. Aurelius we seem to traverse a long gallery of national portraits, every one of which brings a real individual man before us. The Sulla, the Marius, and the Cæsar of Roman history are there presented to us each with traits of character as subtly distinguished from the others as the Macbeth, the John, the Richard of our great English dramatist. The Brutus, the Cassius, the Antony of the historians stand apart from one another as clearly on their pages as in the tragic scenes of the most illustrious master of human character. Shakspeare, it will be remembered, has made no attempt to delineate any leading personage of the Grecian annals. Of all the heroes of Athens and Sparta there was none presented to him to

whom, as a painter of human portraits, he felt his genius attracted. But it would be worthy of a Shakspeare to discriminate between the shades of astuteness in an Augustus and a Tiberius, of selfish cruelty in a Caligula and a Nero, of military bluntness in a Vespasian and a Trajan; between the roving curiosity of a Hadrian and the morbid self-inspection of an Aurelius. But all these characters have been passed in review in the course of the works on Roman history which I have formerly published. The portion of the present volume which deals with their careers is for the most part abridged from those ampler narratives; but I hope that in the lighter touch with which they are here treated I have not failed to preserve the truth and spirit of their portraits.

3. There is yet a third period or stage in Roman history, and one which to my own mind exceeds in vital interest either of the preceding, but I am at a loss for any single word to describe it. With the age of the Antonines commences the dissolution of ancient society, and the wonderful transmutation of ideas which issued in the general reception of the Christian religion. We enter at this crisis upon a history of opinion. The arts languish; arms, except on the distant frontiers of the empire, are piled upon the ground; but the exercise of thought is more widely spread and more generally active than ever. After the second century of our era the political history of the times becomes imperfect and fragmentary. The writers who have professed to transmit it have no grasp of the actual connexion of events. They have no insight nor sympathy with individual character, and the portraits they have left us are mere unfinished sketches or careless daubs. Few public men stand prominently forward on their canvas, and these few, such as Constantine, Theodosius, Stilicho, or Alaric, seem still to elude our examination, so blurred and featureless are the likenesses

which are offered us of them. But the history of these times is the history of masses rather than of individuals, of opinions rather than of events, of social rather than of civil or political movements. We lack human characters to analyse, but we have human ideas and moral principles placed vividly before us, in records which are of deep and enduring interest. The story of the conflict between the old and the new belief, such as we can decipher from these materials, is one of grave significance, and one to which we may be more particularly attracted at the present day from the similar strife of religious opinion which is now active among ourselves. The discussions of the third and fourth centuries were not less vigorous nor less wide-reaching, than those of our own. But to describe this latter period of Roman history effectively it would again be necessary to enter into critical investigations beyond the scope of these pages. A few years ago I could only have referred the curious reader to the great work of Gibbon, to arrange and interpret for him the existing monuments of antiquity from which it is to be collected. Since then Champagny, De Broglie, and Ozanam have treated of these times in full detail, and with a direct view to the history of opinion. It is to be regretted, indeed, that these able writers are too subject to the ecclesiastical influences of the Romish creed, and allow themselves, in my judgment, to overstep the true line of moderation both as to the Christian system they commend and the system they depreciate. Nor must I forget to specify the exact critical review of the 'destruction of Paganism,' by Beugnot and Chastel, nor the impartial contributions to the history of the time in the admirable works of Ampère and Amedée Thierry. The English reader needs hardly to be referred to the fair and generous appreciation of all schools and parties by our own lamented Milman. For my own part, I have been constrained by the limits I have assigned myself to treat this

portion of my subject also with a studied reserve, passing lightly over matters which require for their full elucidation a careful comparison of authorities and balance of critical opinions. Nor am I unaware that a history of the dissolution of Paganism, and the development of Christian usage and doctrine, should be the work of the philosopher rather than of the historian ; that it requires not only the ripest scholarship but the most vigorous powers of combination and reflection ; that, as it seems to me to be the worthiest object of all literary ambition, so it is perhaps the most delicate and difficult of any. To such a task I have long since confessed myself unequal :

Et mea jam longo meruit ratis æquore portum.

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WITH THE XI REGIONS OF
AUGUSTUS.



HISTORY OF ROME.



CHAPTER I.

The site of Rome; its configuration and geological formation—Glance at the Italian peninsula; at the basin of the Mediterranean; at the empire beyond it.

WE speak familiarly of the history of Greece and the history of Rome, without considering that the one is, by the very force of the term, the history of a country, of a large and diversified portion of the earth's surface; the other should properly be that of a city only, of one small spot, the home, indeed, of a people, and the centre of an empire, but in itself a single site, the extent of which can be embraced by the eye even at one glance. And this contrast belongs not to the histories of Greece and Rome only; Egypt and Assyria and Persia of old, England and France and Germany in later times, have all given their names to the history of the peoples who have inhabited them; but Rome takes the lead among the few cities, such as Tyre, Carthage, and Venice, which have been accepted by the common traditions of mankind as the names, not of places only, but of empires.

In the survey, therefore, of the history of the Roman nation and empire which these pages are intended to give, it will be well to begin with a description of the spot itself, the name of which has become thus identified with the whole nation and the empire it acquired.

The Empire of Rome was destined to last for eleven centuries, to be continued through a second existence, with its seat transferred to Constantinople for just eleven centuries more, while no small portion of the ideas which it produced or which accumulated round it,

its laws, its language, its social and civil usages, still exist even to this day throughout large portions of the tract over which it formerly dominated. The basements of Rome were laid in an antiquity far deeper than this, in geological eras beyond the ken of human intelligence, but we may at least trace them down through a long succession of ages, and discover how they were piled up from era to era, from revolution to revolution, till they formed the soil upon which the historic city was erected, and still continues to exist.

The site of ancient Rome occupies a cluster of low eminences, threaded by the winding stream of the Tiber. These little hills, or mounts—for the names of *collis* or of *mons*, severally assigned to them, had probably no different shade of meaning in the languages to which they respectively belonged—were of nearly equal height, and scarcely rose, or rise at present, more than one hundred and fifty feet above the level of the river. The tufa, the stone of which they for the most part consist, is evidently of igneous origin, and of this substance the greater part of Rome, both the ancient and modern, has been built; but the slope of the Vatican, on the right bank, is an argillaceous substance, which has furnished materials for the brick-work so extensively used by the early builders, and when thoroughly baked and cemented with the unrivalled mortar of the neighbouring tufa, has proved to be even more durable than stone itself. It may be presumed that the hills of Rome have been elevated from the sea by volcanic agency long since lulled to sleep, or still existing only in certain sulphureous vapours and warm springs. The fact that these eminences were raised from the bed of the sea is attested by the discovery of marine substances even now imbedded in them. Oyster-shells, it is said, are found near the summit of the Monte Mario, a hill immediately adjacent to Rome, which rises to the height of 500 feet. But, on the other hand, traces of fluviatile deposits indicate that the river, now shrunk within a narrow channel, must once have washed, not the feet only, but the flanks of the hills through which it has made its way, and that there must have been an era when the deep hollow contained within their circuit was neither an enclosure of palaces, nor a market-place for human assemblies, nor a pasturage for cattle, nor a marsh for the wild duck and the bittern, but an inclosed lake with one narrow outlet. It may be presumed that since that very distant era the general level of the country has been much disturbed, but it is conjectured, from the general appearance of the neighbourhood at the present day, that the waters of the river which conveyed the washings of the

Apennines to the ocean were at length discharged by some internal convulsion through the low line of hills which even now nearly meet together from either side above Ostia.

The primeval stream, thus liberated in its course, has ever since run rapidly between the hills of Rome, and still continues to drain the waters which flow down their inner slopes. Of the site of the ancient city far the larger part lies on the left bank of the river. On this side the hills of Rome form a large segment of a circle, rising for the most part almost imperceptibly from the plain beyond, but falling more suddenly into the interior hollow, while at either extremity, to the north and south, they descend abruptly into the bed of the river. On the right they extend more irregularly along the bank, rising at one point to a somewhat greater elevation, and backed by the still bolder eminence of the Monte Mario.

In the hollow formed by the circumvallation of hills on the left bank stands a single independent hillock, with a level summit and steep escarpment, well defined, and of a figure irregularly lozenge-shaped, each side measuring a little more or a little less than a quarter of a mile. Removed about 400 yards from the bank of the river, and almost screened from it by the advancing horns of the circumjacent ridge, screened still more effectually in the earliest period of its history by the dense jungle which choked the valleys on all sides of it, this hill—the Palatine, as it came in after-ages to be designated—could hardly be detected by the eyes of a stranger from beyond the limits of the inclosure. The Tiber, rushing between these obstacles with its volume of rapid waters, could with difficulty be stemmed by oar and sail, and the vast fleets of vessels which wafted their treasures to the quays of Rome at the height of her prosperity were commonly tracked or warped against the descending current. It was by a special Providence, according to Virgil, that the stream was checked and stayed, to facilitate the ascent of the bark of the pious Æneas. Such a site, so easily hidden and so little accessible, might naturally tempt the roving brigands of Central Italy to fix on it their permanent settlements. Though traces may be discovered in the later manners of the Italians of their original descent from a race of nomads, yet we find them distinguished at the first dawn of history by the general adoption of settled habitations. The idea of the city, and of municipal institutions, was as strongly developed in Italy as in Greece; and in this respect the earliest known inhabitants of either peninsula were equally distinguished from the Gaul, the German, and the

Briton. The strongholds of the Italian and the Greek were the summits of bold eminences, such as rose sometimes in clusters, sometimes with insulated projections, from the plains, or from the scarpèd ridge of a mountain spur; and the cultivators of the little territory around them resided generally within the shelter of their walls. But the domain of the first fortress on the Palatine was limited by the conflicting claims of the occupants of similar retreats on almost every height around it. The Tarpeian hill, looking northward up the stream of the Tiber, was the site, according to an early legend, of a town denominated Saturnia; the Janiculus, across the river, bore a city of its own name; the Quirinal, which stood next, to the left of the Tarpeian, was settled by a tribe of Sabines, the people of the district reaching north-eastward to the Apennines; the Latins, who held, with a confederacy of thirty states, the great plain of the Campagna to the south-east, had a place of meeting on the Aventine; the whole of the right bank of the Tiber belonged to the still more powerful nation of the Etruscans. The earliest legends of Rome indicate the occupation of the Palatine by a colony of Arcadians, one of the most primitive races of Greece; but it was seized again by an offset from a Latin tribe, and converted by them into a stronghold for the unsettled brigandage of the country round. This confined and secluded eminence afforded, however, a retreat, but no means of sustenance, to its primeval occupants, and the Romans, to give this people at once the name which history has assigned it, were compelled by stern necessity to fight with every neighbour for their daily living. A nation that exists by warfare must also secure itself by alliances. As the Palatine hill throws out a spur across the hollow of the Forum to connect itself with the general system of the Roman eminences, as the Capitoline or Tarpeian was originally united by a gentle swell of ground to the Quirinal, so the Romans sought alliances and cultivated peaceful relations with the one hand even while fighting for their existence with the other, and early learnt to relax from the rigid exclusiveness of manners and kinships which generally characterised the Italian races. Roman statesmen and historians remarked from an early period as a prominent fact in their national career, that while the martial temper of their people was formed in the school of aggression or defence, they were driven by circumstances, or inclined by nature, to sympathise with their allies and dependents, to admit from time to time fresh infusions of foreign blood into their own body, and assimilate in turn the political elements of all the

nations around them. Such was the good fortune of Rome, or such the Providence which guided from the first the destinies of the imperial city. The seven hills were first united within the cincture of a single wall; towns and villages, districts and provinces, countries and continents became connected together in the course of centuries under one mighty polity; the franchise of the city and the rights and burdens of government were conceded at each succeeding crisis to strangers who could use and bear them for the common good, till Rome, the fairest object of creation, as her children loved to call her, became a world-wide empire, and all her subjects were Romans.

The Palatine hill, as we have seen, the first nucleus of the Roman Empire, lay in the centre of a girdle of eminences, all, we may suppose, thrown up together from a lower level by some submarine volcanic agency. For there can be no doubt that the time once existed when the district of the Campagna—a plain with but slight undulations, which stretches between the Apennines and the Mediterranean, from the Mount Soracte at one extremity to the promontory of Circeii at the other—was a long and slightly curved indenture of the sea, washing the feet of the mountain chain which is now the central ridge of Italy. This plain constituted, in fact, the first zone of the Roman conquests; to the south it became extended over a second geological formation of similar character; the low lands which now lie between the mountains and the sea from Circeii to Surrentum were doubtless once submerged beneath the waters, and represent another gulf extending to the foot of the Apennines. But Italy itself, the great peninsula which protrudes so boldly into the map of the midland waters, is due to a wider upheaval of the earth's crust, and attests another geological revolution at some period long antecedent to these. This second zone of Roman conquests embraces the vast igneous formation of the Apennines, with all the spurs and valleys dependent upon it. Again far beyond the Apennines and the peninsula of Italy another greater revolution, and probably much earlier than this, has cast up the mountain walls which encircle the basin of the Mediterranean itself. The Alps and the Atlas, the mountains of Spain and of Palestine, all combine together in one mighty system, and confine the midland waters so as to form a highway of communication between regions of immense extent and population, of infinite variety, and to blend them into one people by laws, language, commerce, and other social relations. All this varied portion of the globe's surface, all these numerous

peoples, constituted the Roman Empire at the height of its power, and yet the Roman Empire embraced other lands and other populations also. Beyond the Alps still lay the tracts of Gaul, Germany, and Britain; beyond the mountains of Greece and Illyria extended the regions of Pannonia, Mœsia, and Dacia; beyond the Taurus and Libanus were spread the realms of Pontus, Armenia, Persia, and Arabia, all of which owed allegiance, some for centuries, others for a few years only, to the power which was enthroned upon the Palatine. The last and outermost zone of the Roman Empire was lost in regions the geological formation of which may date back to countless ages, before the upheaval of the Apennines, the Alps, or the Atlas.

CHAPTER II.

Formation of the Roman people—Mythology and tradition—The Siculi, the Ligures, the Pelasgians, the Aborigines, the Arcadians, the Etruscans, the Sabines, and the Latins; comparison of their religious ideas and social usages—Traces of their respective characters in the Roman polity—Descent of the great Roman families from these peoples respectively.

WHEN we come to trace the earliest records of the Roman people we shall have to note the distinction between history and legend. It will be well, even before we arrive at that point, to discriminate between the historical and mythological notices which remain to us of the various peoples from whom the Romans were themselves descended. For even from the mythology of a nation, faint and shadowy as is the reflection it supplies of the popular thought and character, we may hope to gain some insight into the conditions of their early existence. The Roman Campagna, now for the most part a bleak and naked pasture-ground for cattle, was undoubtedly in the primitive ages densely covered with the oak, the ilex, and other trees of the forest. Even as late as the Imperial period we are surprised sometimes at the notices we discover of woods and groves, approaching almost to the walls of Rome itself, where the undulating plain is now entirely denuded of foliage. But the clearance of the soil was the work of ages, and had been continually in progress from the era of the early kings. The first mythology of Rome and Italy is connected with the great social revolution introduced into the country by the earliest attempts at husbandry.

Saturnus, the most ancient of the Italian divinities, is the god of sowing; his name betokens the change from the life of the hunter to the life of the husbandman, from the habits of mere nomad existence to those of settled habitation, and therewith of civil polity. The age of Saturn becomes a landmark in the national traditions. It is remembered as the close of the period of perpetual warfare, the inauguration of an era of peace and civility. The age of Saturn is the age of gold. Saturn becomes the eponym of all useful and humane discovery. He is the inventor of the art of horticulture as well as of agriculture. His consort Ops is the representative of wealth, with which he is for ever associated. The scythe he wields in the later mythologies as the god of Time the destroyer, is more properly the hook with which he teaches men to prune their fruit-trees, to mow their grass, and to gather in their corn. The age of Saturn, again, is an age of innocence and simplicity, of modesty and honest labour, such as becomes the life of the fields and pastures. It is an era of rustic equality, where everyone toiled for himself and gained his living by the work of his own hands, not by that of dependents and bondsmen. The festival of the Saturnalia, when the slaves of a later age were allowed for a few days all the licence of free men, reminded the Romans of this happy period of common interests and universal freedom.

But not Saturn only, but the gods too who derive from him, are patrons or representatives of the arts of cultivation. It was Saturn who instructed Janus in the use of the hook and the pruning of the vine-tree. The hook is also the symbol of Vertumnus, who represents the change of the season from the death of winter to the genial life of spring. Faunus, the son of Saturn, is the inventor of manuring, under the name of Sterculus, which gave occasion for a misdirected sneer to the Christian Apologists. Pilumnus, another son of the father of agriculture, was the patron of the art of pounding corn, before the invention of the mill for grinding. The advent of the age of cultivation was celebrated throughout the peninsula of Italy, which seems to have been everywhere conscious of the benefit it thence derived, and Italy became known as 'Saturnia tellus,' the land of Saturn. The earliest buildings in Rome, on the Capitoline Mount, the city of legend anterior to history, was itself called Saturnia; and it is possible that some of the primitive customs of the Romans, such as the shutting of the gates of Janus in time of peace, and throwing them open in

time of war, were a reminiscence even then faint of this legendary epoch.

Beneath this crust of fond and fanciful tradition we get a thin and barren stratum of actual national history. We still possess the names, and very little more than the names, of at least four distinct peoples, which seem to have succeeded and displaced each other upon the soil of Rome. The age of gold, if it ever existed there, gave place, as far as real history can trace it, to an age of blood and iron. The earliest real name in Roman history is that of the Siculi. 'The city which holds sway over every land and sea, and is now occupied by the Romans, was first peopled by the Siculi, a barbaric race, sprung from the soil.' Such is the declaration of Dionysius, the compiler of the most authentic account we possess of Roman Antiquities. Tradition records the foundation by this people of other towns in the neighbourhood of Rome, such as Antemnæ and Tibur, and it is generally supposed, though they have left few traces behind them, that they spread from time to time over the whole of Italy, and were driven by the superior force of the tribes behind them from one end of the peninsula to the other, till they found a final retreat in the island of Sicily. To this island they have given a name which has survived the conquests of the Carthaginians, the Romans, the Arabs, and the Normans, and it is probable that the blood of the Siculi still forms the basis of the national life of the existing population.

Next to the Siculi came the Ligures, and over them the darkness of antiquity settles with little less obscurity. But whereas the Siculi come before us utterly unconnected with any of the known families of the human race, the Ligures, it would seem, may be affiliated to the Basques, and so far associated with the received ethnology of Europe. It is affirmed, indeed, that a few traces still remain in Italy of the language of its Basque population, in the names of places; nor can the Ligurians be said to have been chased, like the Siculi, out of the peninsula. They seem rather to have yielded to their conquerors, and submitted to be trampled under them; they shrank at last into one corner of the country throughout which they had once prevailed. The Liguria of history is confined to the narrow strip of land between the foot of the Alps and the Mediterranean, within which limits the peculiarities of the national character, strongly marked and distinctly recorded, even yet continue to assert themselves.

It is not impossible that the Ligurians may have left an indication of their early occupation of the site of Rome in the names

Suburra, Esquilinus, and Carinæ, all of which, it would seem, may be traced to the vocabulary of the Basque language. A very ancient tradition records the existence of a Septimontium, or political combination of seven hills, in a Rome far earlier than the city of accredited history, and the hills to which it refers were not identical with the seven which are classically famous. They embrace only the central portion of the site of the later Rome, the Palatine and the Germalus, which at a later period were confounded together; the Oppius and Cispius, forming a part of the Esquiline; the Fagutal, the Carinæ, and the Suburra, all of which faced the Palatine across the hollow of the later Forum Romanum. This Septimontium constituted the city of the Ligures, and of this they seem to have been dispossessed by the next succeeding wave of population, to which is given the name of Pelasgian. Here again we seem for a moment to tread upon firmer ground, but again we are doomed to disappointment. Of the Pelasgians we may say thus much, that they were the inhabitants of Greece antecedently to the Hellenes, and were spread far and wide over the face of Southern Europe generally. They retained, no doubt, a considerable portion of the character and language which afterwards became the Greek; and to their influence may be assigned many of the traces, both in language and of mythology, which form so mysterious a link between the Greeks and the Italians. It is to this connexion that we may ascribe the legends of Hercules on the soil of Italy; it is from some reminiscence, probably, of Pelasgic tradition that the Romans of a much later age attributed to the Arcadian Evander the foundation of a Grecian city on the Palatine, and that so many other sites of Western Italy were supposed to have been originally colonised from Greece. But with the Pelasgians were connected another people of descent still more mysterious, the so-called Aborigines, who were supposed from their name to have been the most primitive or original inhabitants of the Italian soil; unless, indeed, as some conjectured, their title was itself a misnomer, and they should rather have been called Aberrigines, and regarded as aliens who had wandered into the peninsula at some unknown epoch.

It was by the union, however, of the Pelasgians and the Aborigines according to the prevailing tradition, that the Siculi and the Ligures were overthrown, and their power in Italy extinguished. The new possessors signalised themselves by the massive fortifications which they erected, of which some mighty remains may even now be traced at a distance of perhaps thirty centuries; and it is

evident that of all conquerors of Italian soil none laid their hands so heavily upon it, and impressed their mark so deeply and durably as these.

Before we come to the point at which our historic narrative must begin it will be well to carry our view beyond the cluster of hills over which the name of Rome was eventually to be extended, and observe, with the map of Central Italy before us, how critically the future mistress of the world was placed with reference to the conflicting powers that might be arrayed against her. After the wave of the Pelasgians and the Aborigines had floated away, and tribes of other names, and probably of other blood and descent, had succeeded to their lands and fortresses, three considerable nations, which have been already specified, met together just at this point. The Tiber, descending almost due south from the Apennines to the Mediterranean, and making with the coast-line an acute angle on the right, and an obtuse angle on the left, separated the country of the Etruscans from that of the Sabines and of the Latins. Again, the Anio (now the Teverone), running westward from the central ridge of the peninsula, and striking perpendicularly upon the Tiber, three miles above the spot just designated, formed the line of demarcation between the Sabines and the Latins themselves. Rome accordingly was placed almost at the point of junction of the three rival nationalities.

The institution of the fortified city; as the nucleus of the political combination, such as we find it to have existed throughout Central Italy in these early times, may be taken as a sign that the country is in the possession of a foreign race which has subdued the original inhabitants and holds their lands by the right of conquest. Wherever a tribe has settled upon soil hitherto unoccupied we find that it has spread itself along the sides of the rivers and over fertile plains, clearing the forest rood by rood, and planting its scattered habitations securely on every spot to which chance or convenience has conducted it. Thus the inhabitants first known to us of Gaul and Germany, may seem to have been the aborigines of the land. They found perhaps on their arrival no prior possessors of the soil on which they planted themselves, and they had no need to defend their acquisitions by fortified posts and armed garrisons in the centre of every plot they occupied. But in Italy, on the contrary, both tradition and early ethnological traces will, as we have noticed, assure us that neither Etruscans, Sabines, nor Latins were aboriginal possessors of the peninsula, but were themselves intruders

upon the heritage of feeblar races before them. The warlike Pelasgi, who first erected the great ramparts which have so long survived them, may have become enervated by their early successes, and been unable to maintain their own defences. It is only in these primitive remains, and in the fragments of their language which became imbedded in the tongues of Central Italy, that we can now trace the existence of these long-perished peoples. The Sabines and Latins have conquered and degraded them; these new-comers have long maintained themselves in the very citadels of the conquered, and have further strengthened and multiplied them. The institution of the City remains to attest the fact of their unrecorded conquest after the elements of resistance have been trampled in the dust. Throughout the territory of the Etruscans this conquest has been even more complete. The language of the Pelasgians has there been entirely obliterated. But the Etruscans have retained or assiduously copied the Pelasgic style of fortification, and have proved themselves throughout many centuries of their domination worthy of the inheritance of strength and vigour upon which they have entered.

Resembling one another in this main feature of their polity, the Etruscans, the Sabines, and the Latins are distinguished in other important particulars. Whatever may have been the course of migration which led the Etruscans to their final settlement in Central Italy, their early connexion with the East seems established from the character of their institutions. Their religion was a mystery and a craft, like the Egyptian and other Eastern systems, jealously guarded and professionally communicated; although its priests did not constitute a special caste, like the Druids, the Magi, and the Brahmins, but were at the same time the warriors, the proprietors, and the statesmen of the commonwealth. Such was the Etruscan Lucumo, king, priest, and landlord, and such he maintained himself, in spite of the advance of the commercial spirit among his people, some of whose cities on the Tyrrhene coast had become emporia of the traffic of the Mediterranean. But in the eighth century before our era the power of the Etruscans had already sustained a blow; they had lost their hold of the countries they once possessed north of the Apennines; the connexion with their advanced posts in Latium and Campania appears to have been dislocated; they were confined to a confederacy of twelve cities in Etruria proper, strictly allied, and still indeed by far the strongest and most important section of the Italian communities.

The Etruscan religion was a refined theosophy. It proclaimed the existence of a Supreme Being, a Providence or Fate, who was rather the Soul of the World itself than a person exterior to it. The lesser gods, like those of Egypt and India, were emanations from this Being. The world itself was subject to periodical mutations: men and things had their appointed courses; there was a future state of rewards and punishments. The Etruscans conceived, like other heathens, that the will of the deity and the course of future events might be ascertained by the observation of omens. Their soothsayers drew auguries from the flight of birds, but they claimed a special gift of interpreting the signs of victims' entrails and of meteoric phenomena.

The religious ideas of the Sabines and Latins, on the other hand, were less refined, and affected less mystery. The indigenous cult of Italy had regarded the daily and common wants of men: the husbandman worshipped the genii of the winds and skies, the shepherd those who protected his flocks from the wild beast or the murrain, the warrior those by whom his arrows were wafted to the mark or the crafty stratagem suggested. It was also domestic, and concerned the preservation of property, the guardianship of family rights and affections, the prolonged existence of the spirits of the departed. The Sabines maintained these ideas in the greatest purity and simplicity; the Latins seem, from their position on the coast, to have had an earlier connexion with the Greeks, some of whose colonies were planted on their soil; and they partook more than their ruder neighbours of the Greek devotion to moral abstractions, such as Wisdom, Power, and Beauty. But they both agreed in the infinite multiplication of their objects of worship. Every city had its guardian divinity; every wood and stream its genius, its nymph or faun; every family offered a special service to the patron of the house, the deified spirit of its earliest ancestor. The maintenance of this family worship was a solemn obligation descending to the heir of the estate, and in default of natural heirs the practice of adoption was specially enjoined for its preservation. The cult of the Lares and Penates, the domestic guardians of the family, seems to have been common, with some variety of usage, to Etruscans, Sabines, and Latins.

The religion of the Sabines and Latins was simple and impulsive, that of the Etruscans philosophical and reflective. The one bowed with submission to the gods, while the other inquired into their nature and explored their will. But whatever difference we may

trace between them, we find them associated together in the cult of the Roman people, who were placed, as we have seen, at the point where these ideas might first come in contact and coalesce. We shall find the threefold origin of the state marked no less strongly in its political institutions. From Etruria came the division into tribes, curies, and centuries, the array of battle, the ornaments of the magistracy, the *laticlave*, the *prætecta*, the apex, the curule chairs, the lictors, the triumphs and public games, the whole apparatus of the calendar, the sacred character of property, the art and science of mensuration, and, in short, the political religion of the state. From Latium were derived the names of prætor, consul, and dictator, the institution of the *Fecials*, or military heralds, the habits of husbandry, together with the national respect for it; and finally the Latin language itself. From Sabellia, the region of the Sabines, were deduced the names of military weapons, one of which, the spear or *quiris*, gave a second designation to the Roman people. The Roman title of Imperator seems to have been a popular application of the Sabine term *embratur*. The patriciate and patronship belonged more or less to all the nations which surrounded Rome, and so also did the habit of dwelling in cities, and the institution of municipal administrations. Such was the case also with the division into 'gentes,' clans or septs, and the remarkable extent of domestic authority accorded to the father and the husband. This mixed formation of Roman society may be mythically represented to us by the legends which describe the first and third of the kings as Latins, the second and fourth as Sabines, while the last three of the seven are Etruscans. But there is probably some historic truth in the claims of the chief Roman families to descent from one or the other of these peoples respectively. It is interesting to trace the Julii, the Tullii, the Servilii, the Geganii, the Quinctii, the Curiatii, the Clœlii to Alba; the Furii and Hostilii to Medullia; the Coruncanii to Cameria; the Porcii and Manilii to Tusculum, all in Latium. The Appii, Postumii, Valerii, Marcii, Fabii, Claudii, and Calpurnii were Sabines. The Cîlnii and Licinii came from Arretium; the Cæcinæ from Volaterra; the Vettii from Clusium; the Pomponii, Papii, and Coponii from other places in Etruria. Roman history is sprung from a great collection of aristocratic records. It is well to fix our minds from the first upon the eminent families on whose fortunes and achievements its interests and its glory mainly rest.

CHAPTER III.

The earliest legends of Rome; Hercules and Cacus, Evander, Æneas, and the Alban kings—The alleged foundation of the city by Romulus—The first four kings of Rome.

It is well known that Hercules appears under different names in all the ancient mythologies. With Rome he is connected by the story of his combat with the robber Cacus, who dwelt in a cave beneath the Aventine. The flames this monster vomited may represent the sulphureous gases which are derived from the volcanic origin of the hill. The legend of Evander assumes the existence of a city on the central spot of the future capital, some centuries prior to the era assigned to its reputed founder Romulus; nor was there any accredited account of the disappearance of this Arcadian stronghold to make way for the later foundation. Next to that of Evander succeeded the legend of Æneas, a fable no doubt of great antiquity, long current among the Romans, before its immortality was fixed by the genius of Virgil. It dates from a period earlier than any genuine records of history. It is not a Greek legend, nor can we perhaps affiliate it to the remains of Pelasgian tradition. The fiction is more probably derived from the widespread celebrity of the Trojan War, which, it may be supposed, was no less seductive to the imagination of the distant stranger a thousand years before our era than it continued to be in the Middle Ages, when the English, the French, and the Spaniards all vied with one another in claiming descent from the illustrious fugitives from Troy.

The fable of Æneas becomes the great historic legend of Rome. Among a number of stories of various and uncertain origin the prevalent tradition of the Roman people, to which currency was given by Fabius Pictor, and confirmed to all posterity by the monumental work of Livy, ran thus:—

Æneas, with his band of Trojans, storm-tost by the hate of Juno, but protected by superior powers and the eternal destinies of Rome, landed on the coast of Latium. His adversaries fell before him; and having allied himself by marriage to the royal house of the Laurentes, he had reigned over their territory till he was drowned in the brook Numicius. His son Ascanius or Iulus founded Alba Longa on a ridge of hill beneath the Alban Mount, and there the descendants of the Trojan hero had held sway for 300 years, till

disunion arose between the royal brothers Numitor and Amulius, and the one was dispossessed of his kingdom by the other. Rhea Sylvia, the daughter of the discrowned chief, was destined to barrenness as a vestal virgin, but she had yielded to the embrace of the god Mars, and had brought forth twins, whom their cruel uncle caused to be exposed. They were wafted, however, by the overflowing Tiber to the foot of the Palatine, where a she-wolf gave them suck, till rescued by Faustulus, the keeper of the royal sheepfold. By him they were placed under the care of his wife Acca Laurentia, and brought up among the shepherds as shepherds themselves. The youths, who bore the names of Romulus and Remus, as they grew to man's estate excelled in beauty, strength, and courage, and became the heads of two parties, the Quinctilii and the Fabii. Remus was seized in a combat with the shepherds of Numitor, and brought before his grandfather, to whom Romulus was introduced by Faustulus, and the secret of their birth disclosed. The youths were encouraged to attack the tyrant Amulius, whom they conquered and slew. Thereupon Numitor surrendered to them the tract of land from the Tiber to the sixth mile on the road to Alba. The brothers contested the honour of founding a city to be held by them in common. Appeal was made to the decision of augury. Romulus took his stand on the Palatine, and Remus on the Aventine, and while Remus was the first to observe a flight of six vultures, Romulus was straightway favoured with the sight of twelve, and the people thereupon acknowledged him victor. The observation of birds was itself an Etruscan rite; and so, again, according to the Etruscan custom, Romulus yoked together a bull and a heifer, both without a spot, and with a brazen ploughshare drew a furrow around the Palatine. Thus he marked out the line of the *pomœrium*, the space to be left vacant behind the intended wall, to separate the dwellings of the genuine citizens from those of their clients and strangers. He then commenced the building of the wall, but ere it had reached the height of a man Remus leapt in derision over it, and Celer, the friend of Romulus, or possibly Romulus himself, slew him in his ire. The Romans remembered long afterwards in the agony of the civil wars that the rising walls of Rome were moistened with the blood of a brother.

The slayer of Remus had haughtily exclaimed, 'So perish all who dare to climb these ramparts!' and the words might be accepted as of good omen. Nevertheless the people and their chief

Year of the
City (U.C.) 1.
Before Christ
(B.C.) 753.

felt the shame and peril they had incurred, till the shade of the murdered man appeared to the guilty brother and required the institution of a festival in his honour. Thus the good omen was confirmed, while the evil omen was averted. The circumstance may deserve to be recorded as the first instance of the scrupulousness of religious feeling which generally runs throughout the history of the Romans in such close connexion with their manifold deeds of rapine and violence.

Romulus himself, according to the legend, was descended from the blood of the Latin kings through the union of his ancestress with the Trojan stranger. But the people he first gathered around him were a motley crew, of unknown and diverse origin. He opened an asylum or place of refuge, secure by its strong position as well as by sacred rites, on the platform between the two eminences of the Tarpeian hill, to which he invited the discontented and the lawless from all the country round; and as soon as he deemed himself strong enough to assume an independent position demanded women from the neighbouring cities for the men he had collected. Such intermarriage, however, was scornfully refused. He dissembled, and presently announced that he would hold a public festival of the god Consus at the foot of the hill he occupied. The Sabines and the Latins crowded to the entertainment, bringing with them their wives and daughters; when the Roman youth rushed upon them and carried off the women to their stronghold. This was the famous Rape of the Sabines, for such was the designation it acquired from the events that followed. While the Latin clans of Cænina, Crustumerium, and Antemnæ were the first to fly to arms and suffered easy defeat, the Sabines, biding their time and coming with greater force, actually penetrated into the Roman fastness. Tarpeia, daughter of the warder of the citadel, was tempted by the glitter of the Sabines' bracelets, and offered to open the gates for the gift of what they wore on their left arms. They entered at her bidding, but indignantly crushed her to death under the weight of their bucklers.

The Sabines were now in possession of the Tarpeian, but the Romans still retained the Palatine. The two nations met in battle in the valley between them. The Sabines prevailed, and were pursuing the Romans up the ascent from the Velia to the summit of their hill, when Romulus vowed a temple to Jupiter, and the god miraculously stayed the assailants. The temple was duly erected, and dedicated to Jupiter Stator. Renewed and restored

from age to age, it continued to mark the traditionary spot, which has been so plainly designated by well-known topographical notices that we are at no loss to identify it even at this day. The Romans valiantly renewed the battle, and in their turn drove the Sabines into the valley. Then it was that the women they had seized descended from the fastness, threw themselves between the combatants, and induced them to accept the pact and ratify the accomplished union with terms of friendship and alliance. The peace thus effected between the fathers and the sons-in-law was again remembered when the daughter of Julius Cæsar was accepted as a pledge of amity by his rival Pompeius.

After this union the Palatine continued to be occupied by the Romans, while the Quirinal was assigned to the Sabines. The united people adopted in common the names of *Romani* and *Quirites*, the latter appellation being taken, according to the tradition, from the Sabine town of Cures, but more probably in fact from *quiris*, the Sabine name for a spear. The two kings Romulus and Titus Tatius reigned conjointly. The two peoples met to transact affairs in common in the valley between their respective hills, which spot came to be known as the Forum Romanum.

At the end of five years Tatius was slain in a sudden attack of the Laurentines, to whom he had refused satisfaction for violence done by his subjects. From this time Romulus reigned alone over both nations in Rome. He was a brave and victorious ruler, and made successful war upon the Etruscan people of Fidenæ and Veii. To him was attributed the first establishment of the Roman constitution, to be described more particularly hereafter. After a prosperous reign of thirty-seven years the founder of the Roman state was removed suddenly from the world. He had assembled his subjects for a military review at the Goat's Pool, a spot in the Campus Martius, when the sun became eclipsed, and the multitude was dispersed by an awful tempest. When they reassembled the king had disappeared. He had been carried up into heaven on the chariot of his father Mars. The mourning of the people, still ignorant of his blissful end, was allayed by the vision attested by one Julius Proculus, who declared that on his way from Alba the shade of the hero had appeared to him, and promised protection to the Romans under the name of the deified Quirinus. This legend, like most of the miracles of Roman story, was rationalised by a more sceptical age at Rome itself, and it was confidently affirmed

that the tyrant had been murdered and his body concealed by the Senators.

The two allied peoples could not agree on the choice of a successor. For one year the Senators governed in turn, ten at a time for five days, as *Interreges*. It was at last arranged that the Romans should elect, but their choice should be made from among the Sabines. The name of Numa Pompilius was received with acclamation, and he was invited from his residence at Cures to assume the government. He was reputed the wisest and most just of men, a disciple of Pythagoras, and imbued with all the learning of the times. Moreover he was a favourite of the gods, and under the guidance of the nymph Egeria, whom he consulted in her grotto at the foot of the Cælian hill, he arranged the rites and ceremonies of the Roman religion. It was Numa who assigned their functions to the Pontiffs, the Flamens, the Augurs, and the Fecials. To him was ascribed the institution of the College of the Vestal Virgins, who should be chosen from the noblest families, and have in their holy keeping the sacred fire, the Palladium, and the Penates of the city. By him was also instituted the College of the Salii, who guarded the ancile, or shield which had fallen from heaven, and danced, as their name imports, in honour of Mars their patron. Numa forbade human sacrifices and the worship of the gods under images of wood or stone or metal. It was not till a hundred and seventy years from the foundation of the city that the simple piety of the Romans yielded to the seductions of idolatry. Further, he encouraged the arts of agriculture, upon which the greatness of the Roman nation was founded almost as firmly as upon arms; he divided lands among the citizens, sanctified their bounds with appropriate festivals, erected a shrine to the goddess Fides, and constructed the famous Temple of Janus, the gates of which were opened in time of war, but closed in peace. During the nine and thirty years of this happy reign the gates of Janus were kept constantly shut. Assuredly no such golden age ever followed afterwards.

The third king of Rome, Tullus Hostilius, was in every particular a contrast to the second. He is chosen by the Sabines from among the Romans. He is devoted throughout his career to warlike enterprises, whereby he consolidates and extends the power of the city. He directs his arms against the people of Alba, with whom the Romans disdained to recognise affinity. But the chiefs on either side determined to avoid the

U.C. 39.
B.C. 715.

U.C. 81.
B.C. 673.

mutual slaughter which would render the victors an easy prey to their common enemy the Etruscans; and the quarrel was decided by a combat of three champions on each side. The Horatii, three brothers, fought for Rome; the Curiatii, three brothers also, fought for Alba. Two of the Horatii were first slain, but the three Curiatii were all wounded and weakened, and fell successively beneath the sword of the surviving Roman. A sister of the Horatii had loved a Curiatius, and disloyally bewailed the victory of her countrymen. Horatius slew her in his indignation. The king refused to judge him, but the Duumvirs undertook the case, and sentenced him to be scourged and hanged. Then at last the murderer appealed to the people, and the people, moved to mercy by the service he had done the state, absolved him from the appointed penalty. Such was the origin of the appeal to the people, by which in later times the Roman citizen might avert a sentence of death given by the ordinary tribunals. Another of the warlike legends of this king relates the punishment of Mettus Fufetius, the chief of the Albans, who had now submitted to the Roman power. The Albans had secretly incited the Fidenates to attack the Romans conjointly with the Veientes, and when summoned to give their aid as allies to Rome had been held back by their leader to await the issue of the conflict. But Tullus was victorious, and wreaked stern justice on the traitor who had wavered, by causing him to be tied between two chariots and torn asunder. These and such as these were the wars of Tullus, prolonged through a reign of thirty-two years, at the end of which he was himself struck by lightning, while attempting to perform the appropriate rites to Jupiter Elicius, or the Lightener, as though he had been holy and religious like his predecessor Numa. The god was offended, and slew him.

Again the Romans choose a Sabine to reign over them. The legend of Ancus Martius, the fourth king of Rome, is a more prosaic reproduction of that of Numa. Ancus was a peaceful ruler; he encouraged agriculture, restored the services of religion, and promulgated laws for the civil government of the state. But he could not keep the gates of Janus closed. The Latins and the Etruscans hovered on the outskirts of the city, and required him to protect it with arms, and by the construction of fortifications. To Ancus was ascribed the erection of the Sublician, or wooden bridge of Rome, and also of the prison under the Tarpeian hill. He constructed, moreover, the port of Ostia at the mouth of the Tiber. Under him the Romans, as it would seem, first began

U.C. 113.
B.C. 641.

to practise the arts of commerce. He reigned without a reverse of fortune thirty years, and died in peace and prosperity.

CHAPTER IV.

THE THREE LATTER KINGS.

THE legend of Rome has made some progress during the reign of the first four of her kings. Romulus was the son of a god himself, and Numa is closely associated with a divine influence, while Tullus and Ancus descend into the ranks of mere mortals. A farther and more important step is made in the reputed records of the three kings that follow. With the first of the Tarquins begins what may be called the local history of Rome; Servius inaugurates the constitution, and from the second Tarquin dates the beginning of constitutional history.

Under the reign of Ancus a stranger had come to settle in Rome. He was the son of the Corinthian Demaratus, who had fled his native country and established himself at Tarquinii, in Etruria. He espoused an Etruscan woman named Tanaquil, skilful in auguries and omens, and at her sage instigation had migrated to Rome. Tanaquil divined from the flight of birds the greatness to which her husband was destined. The stranger bore the Etruscan name of Lucumo, but at Rome he adopted the appellation of Lucius Tarquinius Priscus. He ingratiated himself with Ancus, who appointed him guardian of his sons. He won still more the confidence of the people, who favoured the artifice by which he dispossessed his wards of their inheritance and secured the succession for himself. The power thus unjustly acquired he used with moderation and wisdom.

U.C. 138.

From his reign date the earliest notices of the great

B.C. 616.

buildings of the city. The influence of Etruria first appears in the legend of Tarquin the elder, who drained the Forum and enclosed it with porticoes, fortified the hills with stone walls, commenced the building of the Capitol on the Tarpeian hill, which thenceforth obtained the name of the Capitoline, and enlarged the Circus Maximus for the shows and games which he introduced from the land he had quitted. To this great builder is also ascribed the Cloaca Maxima, the gigantic sewer which even now attests a power and greatness in the early people of Rome far beyond what their

reputed history warrants. It has been thought, and not perhaps without reason, that the primitive legends of Rome on which the national history was founded, have done, after all, but scant justice to the real greatness of the city and its people, under the influence of Etruscan civilisation. The Romans, however, were content to attribute the execution of these mighty works to the forced labour of captives taken in war with the neighbouring nations, and they gave Tarquin the fame of a warlike chief as well as an able administrator. He was the first, they said, to celebrate the Roman triumph, and it was to Etruria that they ascribed the robe bespangled with gold, and the chariot drawn by four white horses, with which so many of their generals afterwards ascended the Capitoline hill. The same influence which introduced the triumphal ornaments extended no doubt to other Etruscan costumes, such as the habiliments of war, the *prætexta* of the magistrates, and possibly the toga of the citizens itself. The curule chairs, the lictors, and the fasces are said to be similarly derived. In the story of Attus Navius, the augur, who performed the miracle of cutting the stone with a razor, we may remark the establishment at Rome of the augural science of the Etruscans.

After another long reign of nearly forty years Tarquinius Priscus was assassinated by the sons of Ancus. But they were not allowed to profit by their deed of vengeance. Tanaquil closed the gates of the palace, declared that the king was wounded but not dead, and when his end could be no longer concealed, produced his son-in-law, Servius Tullus, as the elect of the Senate, without consulting the assemblies of the people. Roman tradition declared of Servius, in accordance with his name as it sounded to Roman ears, that he was the son of a slave, who had been recommended to the favour of Tarquin by the prodigies which surrounded him, and whose favour he merited by his character and talents. But the writers of Etruria stepped in to claim him for their own, and another legend declared him to have been a genuine Etruscan, who had come with Cæles Vibenna and a band of his own countrymen, and settled as allies of Rome on the hill denominated the Cælius; his real name was Mastarna, which he was said to have changed to Servius. The place of Servius in Roman history depends mainly on the elements of the Roman constitution which were traditionally ascribed to him, of which farther notice will be taken in our next chapter. But he is also to be noticed as one of the great traditional builders of the city. It was Servius who gave to Rome the full extent which it attained during the whole period of the republic. He enclosed in

A.U. 176.

B.C. 578.

one wall the various fortifications and detached buildings which occupied the seven hills, uniting to the Palatine, the Aventine, the Capitoline and the Cælian, the eastern half of the whole inclosure which comprised the Quirinal, the Viminal, and the Esquiline. The city thus connected he divided into four quarters, the Palatine, the Suburran, the Colline, and the Esquiline, and the citizens into four tribes corresponding to them. The Roman territory he distributed among six-and-twenty tribes, and all these were again divided according to the census of their means into classes and centuries. The organisation of the city was military as well as aristocratic; but the reign of Servius was generally peaceful, and the lands, he acquired by the wars in which he allowed himself to engage he distributed for the most part among the poorer classes. He thus engaged the enmity of his nobles, and became the victim of a conspiracy which they covertly favoured.

The legend, as we have seen, had said that this king was son-in-law of his predecessor; but the legend belied itself and spoke of the two daughters of Servius as married to the sons of Tarquinius. We can only repeat the famous story as it has come down to us. The ambitious Tullia was married to the gentle Aruns, her gentle sister to the proud and cruel Lucius. Tullia ridded herself both of her husband and her sister, and became the spouse of the man who was congenial to her. Servius, in his distress, would have renounced the throne and handed over the Romans to the popular government of consuls. Lucius alarmed the nobles with the prospect of degradation thus opened to them, and when he threw himself upon the aged king and cast him down the steps of the curia, and when Tullia drove her chariot ruthlessly over her father's body, the Senate acquiesced in the deed and in the usurpation of royal power by the murderer. The people grieved over the slaughter of their patron, and from that dreadful day dates the long career of jealousy between the rival parties in the Roman state. The street in which Tullia had committed her accursed crime was branded from that time forth with the title of '*Sceleratus*,' but the murder of the popular sovereign was not fully avenged upon the Senate till Julius Cæsar crushed them at Pharsalia and made himself more than a king over them.

The idea of the Roman legend begins to expand. If Servius was unjustly regarded as a tyrant, the second of the Tarquins was a tyrant indeed. He was a tyrant of the true historic type, dividing the Senate by his intrigues, and ruling over one

party through the favour of another; strengthening himself by family alliance with other tyrants around him, and presuming on his strength to control with a high hand all classes of his subjects, whom he murdered, pillaged, and banished according to his royal caprice. Nor was he less powerful or less grasping abroad than at home. From being one only of an equal confederation of forty-seven cities which held their common festival in the temple of Jupiter Latialis on the Alban mount, Rome under his sway became the chief and mistress of all, and carried her victorious arms into the country of the Hernici and the Volsci, whom she despoiled of part of their territories, and established her military outposts in the midst of them. The colonies of Signia and Circeii, composed of Roman and Latin citizens transplanted from their own homes and endowed with conquered lands, constituted the first of the long list of affiliated commonwealths with which Rome secured her conquests and enriched her people.

The younger Tarquin was also, like his father, a great builder. His architects were his Etruscan allies, his workmen the captives of his Volscian or Latin wars. He completed the magnificent works already undertaken, the construction of the Cloaca and of the Capitol, the name of which was said to be derived from the head of a certain Tulus discovered in digging for the foundations. Beneath the substruction of this mighty edifice were enshrined the prophetic volumes which were offered to the Roman sovereign, nine in number, by the Sibyl of Cumæ. The destinies of the city and perhaps of the world were declared to be contained therein, and the inspired donor demanded a price corresponding to their value. Tarquin refused: she departed, burned three of them, and returning required no less a price for the six remaining. Again Tarquin refused, and again the Sibyl destroyed three volumes, and once more insisted on the first price for the three she still offered. Then at last Tarquin yielded, and the volumes, now trebly precious, were henceforth preserved as the most sacred treasure of the Roman state. From time to time, in seasons of most pressing danger, they were solemnly opened and consulted by the high officer to whom their keeping was entrusted, and became, more than once, an important instrument of government in the hands of the priests and nobles.

But the story of Tarquin the Proud, as he is specially designated, waxes more and more romantic. Alarmed by omens and prodigies, he sends his two sons, together with his nephew Brutus, who was

counterfeiting idiocy, as a protection from the suspected designs of his uncle, to consult the Oracle of Delphi on the fortunes of his house. 'And which of us,' asked the princes, 'shall succeed him in power?' 'He,' replied the priestess, 'who shall be first to salute his mother.' On their return the sons of Tarquin hurried off to the chamber of the women, but Brutus slipped, as if by accident, and embraced the earth, the common mother of all men. The prescience of the deity was soon to be put to the proof.

Tarquin, it seems, was engaged at the time before Ardea, the capital of the Rutuli. The Roman forces were detained by the protracted operations of a blockade, and the young nobles serving in the army were at a loss for occupation. They amused their idleness as best they might, and one day there arose a dispute among a party of them as to the merits of their respective consorts at home. They mounted their horses and galloped off at night to test the qualities of their ladies by the employments in which they should find them engaged. Now, the ladies too, like their lords, were the most part idling and amusing themselves. But Lucretia, the wife of Collatinus, the fairest and the sagest of all, was discovered busy at her loom, with her handmaids plying their tasks around her. Decision was promptly made in her favour, and the party hastened back to their posts. But Sextus, the son of Tarquin, returned quickly, gained access to the chaste matron under cover of his friendship with her husband, and at dead of night stole to her couch and threatened her with proclaiming her dishonour and laying in proof of it the dead body of a murdered slave beside her, unless she submitted to his embraces. Lucretia was overcome, but when the ravisher retired in the morning she sent to her husband Collatinus and her father Lucretius, and on their arrival, accompanied by Brutus and Volumnius, confessed her enforced disloyalty and straightway slew herself in their presence. They all vowed vengeance upon the culprit and his hated family, and Brutus, throwing off the disguise of stupidity, took the lead among them. The body was carried into the Forum, and Brutus, waving the bloody weapon, adjured the Roman people to rise against the tyrant, A decree was passed at the instant to dethrone the reigning family and expel them from the city. When Tarquin hastened back with his army he found the gates closed, and was constrained to retire into Etruria, where he took refuge at Cære.

At this juncture the tradition of the descent of the Tarquins from Etruria comes into full play. From Veii as well as from his

own ancestral Tarquinius, the exiled monarch derives promises of assistance. Envoys are sent to negotiate for his return, or at least for the cession of his estates; but baffled in these endeavours they enter into a conspiracy with some of the young patricians for his restoration. The plot is revealed by the slave Vindicius, and the list of criminals contains the names of two sons of Brutus himself. The liberator in his chair of office sits in judgment upon them, sentences them to death by the lictor's axe, and with constant resolution presides in person at their punishment. The cause of the patriots is the cause of the people, but their support is secured against the machinations of malcontent nobles by the division among them of the tyrant's estates, and the assignment of seven jugera a-piece. The plain which extended towards the Tiber above the city is now consecrated to Mars, and becomes the famous resort of the Romans for their warlike exercises. The corn which was beginning to wave over it was cut down and cast into the river; about the heap which it formed in midchannel towards the centre of the city the silt of the torrent gradually accumulated, and grew to be the island named after the god Æsculapius. Meanwhile the enemy was advancing. The legions of Rome marched forth to the encounter. Brutus and Aruns, one of the sons of Tarquin, fell in combat one with the other. As with the leaders so with their followers; they fell man for man on either side, and the fortune of the day remained undecided, till after both forces had withdrawn for the night a voice was heard from the forest of Arsia, which declared that 'Rome had lost one warrior less than Etruria.' This sufficed for the Etruscans, who retired in dismay. Valerius re-entered Rome at the head of the conquerors, and pronounced the funeral eulogium of the valiant Brutus; the matrons of Rome wore mourning in his honour for the space of a year, and the people raised to him a statue, sword in hand, on the Capitol.

To complete the legend of the Regifugium, or banishment of the kings, the Etruscans are represented to have persisted in their attempt in favour of their kinsman. Again their efforts redounded to the glory of Rome and to the sanctification, by the devotion it excited, of the cause of Roman freedom. Thus Porsena, king of Clusium, though he reached the bridge, was baffled by the strenuous gallantry of Horatius Cocles, who maintained his post thereon till the Romans could cut it down behind him, and then leaped all armed into the Tiber. Thus again was he baffled by the high spirit of Clælia, who escaped from her captivity

and swam the rapid river on horseback. Once more he was baffled by the constancy of Mutius Scævola, one of three hundred young Romans who had vowed to slay him, who, when captured and interrogated by the tyrant, thrust his hand into the fire to show that no torture would avail against him. The legend, however, vacillated as to the main issue. While one stream of tradition asserted that the invader was triumphantly repulsed, another, to which the gravest authorities did not refuse credence, admitted that the city was surrendered to Porsena, and that he withdrew from it with honourable forbearance in admiration of the valour of its defenders.

Tarquin however, it was reported, though abandoned by his most powerful patron, renewed the attack with the aid of allies from Latium. The battle of the lake Regillus, near Alba, was
U.C. 258.
B.C. 496. the crowning incident of this epic chant. Valerius at the crisis of the battle had vowed a temple to Castor and Pollux. Presently two youths of eminent beauty and stature were seen fighting on white horses in front of the Romans, and turning the enemy to flight. While the victors were still engaged in the pursuit, the same unearthly warriors appeared suddenly in the Forum at Rome, washed their arms at the fountain of Juturna, announced the victory, and straightway vanished. The leaders on both sides had met in single combat, and among the Romans fell a Valerius, a Herminius, and an Æbutius. On the other side were slain Mamilius the dictator of Alba, and Titus the last surviving son of Tarquin, for Sextus seems to have met a violent death already; and finally Tarquin himself, though he escaped from the last of his fields, deprived of all assistance, perished in a miserable old age at the court of the tyrant of Cumæ.

Thus far the reputed history of Rome is a series of poetical legends, from which it is impossible to extricate whatever elements of real fact it may and does probably contain. Henceforth, though the legendary character of the narrative is still repeatedly apparent, we may admit that it has at least an historic basis, and trace with more satisfaction the thread by which the institutions of the city are constantly intervoven with the fortunes ascribed to it.

CHAPTER V.

The constitution of the Roman Commonwealth on the expulsion of the Kings, and its pretended foundation on the polity of Servius.

THE expulsion of the Tarquins from Rome; as of the Pisistratids about the same moment from Athens, as of other usurping families in all ages and countries, was the effort of the popular force rising in arms against despotic domination. The history of popular government in Rome dates from the abolition of the regal name and office and the formal establishment of the commonwealth. But the long struggle of the commonalty of the city against the oligarchy was, in fact, only commencing. In order to strengthen their claim to political consideration the commons pretended to derive their rights from an earlier legislation. They appealed to the traditional constitution of Servius as the charter of their privileges, and declared that the various disabilities under which they actually lay were due to the lawless encroachments of the tyrant whom they had rightfully displaced. The constitution of Servius was the ideal to which their cries for political reform were directed, an ideal which, if conceded in name, their opponents contrived by every device to extenuate and discredit in practice. We must go back to the tradition of an earlier constitution than that of Servius, a constitution which was attributed to Romulus, the founder of Rome, himself.

The Roman people, it is said, was divided by its founder into three tribes, the Ramnenses, or companions of Romulus; the Tatienses, or Sabines, under Tatius; and the Luceres, whose origin was assigned to an Etruscan named Lucumo, who settled himself as an ally and associate by the side of the Romans and the Sabines. This latter tribe, however, was regarded as inferior in some respects to the others.

The tribe was subdivided into ten curies, and the curie into ten decuries, each under certain recognised chiefs, named tribunes, curions, and decurions.

Moreover, each tribe was composed of a certain number of houses or clans, named *Gentes*, composed, it may be presumed, not solely of men of the same blood, but of individuals bound together by mutual obligations, by the cult of a common hero their reputed ancestor, and by the right of mutual inheritance. The number of these *Gentes*, each comprising numerous families, was reckoned

originally at 200, afterwards at 300. But again the members of each Gens were subdivided into the patrons and the clients; the former, who constituted the illustrious class of the patricians, claimed to be actual descendants of the primal stock, and formed themselves into an hereditary aristocracy, distinguished by outward signs corresponding to the armorial devices of the feudal nobility; the latter were their clients, or, as in the middle ages, their vassals, originally strangers who had sought a domicile in Rome under the protection of powerful citizens, or captives in war assigned to them, or persons who, having fallen from a higher to a lower estate, were glad to barter their independence for the position they attained as humble followers of the magnates. Under the shelter of his patron the client obtained great social and political advantages, while the state and influence of the patron were often estimated by the number and devotion of his clients.

The great assembly of the patricians was that of the Comitia Curiata, when they met together and voted in their curies for the choice of political and religious officers and decisions of peace or war. But these matters of deliberation were occasional only. The ordinary affairs of the commonwealth were entrusted to a committee, so to speak, of the curies, under the illustrious title of the Senate, the number of which was first fixed by Romulus at 100, enlarged after the union with the Sabines to 200, and still further extended to 300 under Tarquin. The Senate constituted the council of the king, whom it recommended to the curies for election, and to whom it entrusted the command of the armies, and the functions of chief pontiff and supreme judge. The knights, originally 300 in number, to whom Romulus gave the name of Celeres, formed the body-guard of this chief of the state; and the tribune of the army, afterwards the *Magister equitum*, was in rank and power the second magistrate, as at a much later period the prefect of the prætorians stood actually next to the emperor. However named and however appointed, the commander of the guard becomes necessarily the next in place to the ostensible chief of a military government.

Thus, it was said, in the primitive ages the curies or the senate, and the patricians, constituted the City of Rome. In them were centred all the executive and legislative functions of the state: the king himself was one of their body, and subject to their nomination. But of the whole political society these formed but an upper stratum. From the first there was growing up beneath them a class which became far more numerous, of such as were neither

members of this aristocracy, nor its clients, nor its dependents, who enjoyed no share in its political and religious rights, who dwelt perhaps, for the most part, beyond the pomerium and the consecrated limits of the first city itself, in the valleys and on the slopes surrounding the Palatine. The plebeians of early Rome owed their origin either to conquest, under which they had been transported thither from their own homes, or to the pursuit of trade and manual occupations, for which they had voluntarily left them. As domiciled foreigners they continued for generations to live in their own fashion, under their own laws and regulations, with no rights of marriage or of traffic with the patricians; on the other hand, subject only to the direct authority of the king, who summoned them to enlist under his banner, and defend with their arms the share of personal property they were permitted to acquire.

The original territory of the Roman state had been divided among the patricians only; and under the prevailing principle of their law, that the right of possession of all conquered lands was vested in the state itself, this class had claimed the assignment of all such newly-acquired districts for its own use and occupation, as nominal tenant but virtual owner of the soil. In the primitive age of Rome, as elsewhere, trade was held in little repute, and land constituted almost the sole wealth of the community. The patricians continued for some generations to be an aristocracy of wealth no less than of birth and titles. But the plebeians, however unfairly weighted in the race for riches, could not be always kept in poverty and obscurity. Besides the construction of the port of Ostia, the fact that under the dynasty of the Tarquins Rome concluded a treaty with the maritime power of Carthage, attests the wide development of its commerce. The commons of Rome were moreover a thrifty race, and made money not only by petty trade, but by lending on usury, and gradually, no doubt, a portion even of Roman soil had fallen into their occupation. The elder Tarquin had enlarged the base of the original constitution by doubling the number of the patricians, to whom he added a second class of the 'lesser' Gentes, to share with the others in the charges and privileges of government. But the reforms of Servius, it would appear, were directed to effecting a combination between the patricians and the plebeians, and fusing the *populus*, in Roman phrase, and the *plebs* into one people. Servius, a man of foreign and perhaps uncertain birth, was assumed to have no sympathy with the exclusive spirit of the original Romans; but he was conscious of the capacity

of the city which he governed for a wider development, and he determined to make it effectively the centre of one homogeneous nation.

To continue in the spirit of the old Roman historians: he contemplated two instruments for the attainment of this object, the tribes and the centuries; that is to say, the organisation of the civil power on the one hand, and the military power on the other. To each of the tribes and quarters of the city he assigned its own tribunes, or military leaders, its own judges and civil officers, its own deities, and temples, and religious services. They had their own effective municipal constitution, but took no part in the general government of the state. They acted by the force of numbers only; and if senators and patricians generally bore sway among them, it was only by the indirect influence of wealth, rank, and traditional authority. But it was in the centuries that the patricians and plebeians became actually fused together. To Servius was ascribed the institution of the Census, the quinquennial survey of the numbers and property of the Roman people. After each survey or *lustrum* the citizens were divided into six classes, according to their means, and these again into 193 centuries, but so that the first or wealthiest class comprised no fewer than 98 centuries, the others twenty or thirty each, while the lowest class of all embraced in a single century the great multitude of the *proletarii*, those who were *capite censi*, polled only and valued at nothing. The first class, which boasted the great mass of the wealthy citizens, thus outnumbered by one century all the others together; and when the suffrage of the Comitia Centuriata was taken in questions of peace or war, or for the election of civil and military officers, the first class, which was called upon to vote first, carried the day against all the rest combined, not only by its wealth and influence, but by numbers also. To secure the vote of the first, or 'prerogative' class, was to secure the victory.

Thus was the main power of the state to be given to the wealthiest, and to the wealthiest without distinction of birth or nominal rank. But the organisation of the centuries was an essentially military institution, for in early Rome, as in the feudal ages throughout Western Europe, it was to the wealth, especially to the landed possessions of the state, that its defence was mainly confided. Land at Rome was held of the state, as formerly in France and England of the king, as sovereign owner, by the tenure of military

service; and at Rome, as in mediæval Europe, the wealthiest vassal of the sovereign went forth to war in full equipment of arms and armour, attended by his clients and retainers, as lesser vassals, to serve around him in looser array, and more lightly furnished for the battle. It was, however, in the more solid organisation of the legion that the Romans excelled our feudal armies, and by their tactics as much as by their courage and solidity of character that they achieved the mighty results which their history signalises. Our account of the legion may be reserved to a maturer period in its constitution. The military character of the *Comitia* of the centuries was marked by their place of meeting in the *Campus Martius*, beyond the walls, where the Roman people arrayed themselves as if about to march against the foreign enemy. On the occasion of their meeting, and for a month before it, a red flag was suspended from a tower on the *Janiculum*, the outpost of the city on the side of *Etruria*, which was occupied, as if in time of war, by an armed force. As regards the extent of the Roman territory under the *Tarquins*, it may seem to be marked out by two indications that have been preserved to us. *Polybius*, the historian, in the sixth century of the city, records the words of the original treaty which the Romans made with *Carthage*, in the first year of the Republic, in which several cities on the coast of *Latium*, *Ardea*, *Antium*, *Circeii*, and *Tarracina*, are mentioned as subject to Rome; for *Ardea*, besieged by *Tarquin*, is said to have come to terms with the consuls who succeeded him; and ten of the thirty tribes, if we may trust to the enumeration given of them, occupied lands on the side of *Etruria*. It may be presumed further that the lower skirts of the Sabine territory between the *Tiber* and the *Anio* formed a part of the *Ager Romanus*. But a plot of ground so restricted as this seems wholly insufficient to account for the magnificent works which the legend attributes to the *Tarquins*, such as the citadel and temple of *Jupiter* on the *Capitol*, and the solid vaulting of the *Cloaca Maxima*, which extended almost a mile in length under the city, lofty enough to admit a cart loaded with hay, and wide enough for the passage of a boat. The dimensions of the temple may be ascertained perhaps from the express statements of history, but the great sewer remains entire at this day, and completely corresponds with the description we have received of it.

If the account we have received of the elevation of the plebeians by the institution of the centuries be at all historical, it may seem strange that in the next phase that our history presents to us the

patricians should have again acquired a complete ascendancy. The popular outbreak by which the kingly despotism was overthrown redounded, it would seem, to the benefit of the senators and the nobles only. But accepting, as we shall be inclined to do, the common account as in the main correct, it will be interesting to trace the circumstances which may really have brought about this curious result. The supreme power of the dethroned king was immediately transferred entire to two consuls, or, as they were at first denominated, prætors, or leaders. These magistrates were elected by the assembly of the centuries—that is, as we are led to suppose, by the whole people voting by classes—but the choice of the centuries was still referred to the assembly of the curies for ratification. So far did the old tradition still prevail that the same body which had originally made choice of the king was appealed to in the last resort to sanction the election of the consuls. The patricians, acting together in their own assembly, claimed another and a more important check upon the suffrage of the united body of citizens through the instrument of the national religion, which they were allowed to retain exclusively in their own hands; the extension of popular rights to the commons under Servius had omitted to give them any place in the conduct of national rites or the observation of auspices. The priests and the augurs were all still patricians, and they worked so effectually upon the superstitious feelings of the people, that it became an accepted rule that the assembly of the centuries should not be held, or if holding should be instantly dispersed, upon the announcement of unfavourable omens. Baffled by a patrician intrigue under the guise of religion, even the armed array of the centuries would let their hands fall unnerved at their sides; but it would appear that after the issue of the great contest with the Etruscans, the people of Rome were actually disarmed; for records were found to disclose the ignominious fact, which the vain-glorious legends left unnoticed, that Porsena had not only entered the city by capitulation, but had required the conquered people to give up every instrument of steel or iron beyond the bare implements of husbandry. If such were the case it would seem that the military organisation of the centuries was completely crippled, and opportunity given to the patricians to recover much of their surrendered authority.

When the consuls had been designated by the centuries, and accepted by the curies, it was still from a further vote of the superior assembly that they received the Imperium or command of

the legions. Even the curies themselves were jealous of the mighty power they thus created, and it was required of the consuls that one only should exercise his functions within the city at a time, and the other should take his station in the camp beyond it. But the patricians armed themselves with another and a more formidable weapon against the encroachments of the plebeians. They demanded in times of public emergency, whether from foreign attack or from domestic intrigue, that they should have authority to supersede the consular magistracy by the creation of a dictator, in whose single hand the whole power of the state should be effectually lodged, and all privileges of persons and classes overruled, at least for a space of six months. For a period so limited the dictator, seconded by a master of the horse of his own appointment, became the despotic ruler of the state, and was bound by the terms of his compact to see that it took no harm. It was against the plebeians, quite as much as against the foreign enemy, that the vigour of this sovereign was invoked.

CHAPTER VI.

The first consuls—The first dictator—The first secession of the plebs—Reconciliation effected by Menenius Agrippa—The first tribunes of the plebs.

THE dates of the presumed historical events of our history up to the Regifugium have been thus far very loosely indicated, inasmuch as they are set forth with the greatest discrepancy by the meagre authorities we have to guide us. But the date assigned to the Regifugium itself, the year of the city 245 and before Christ 509, may be conveniently accepted as a fixed epoch; from that period the Romans themselves introduced the usage of marking time by driving a nail every year into the temple of Minerva; thenceforth the list of their consuls seems to have been regularly kept, and from this list, though not wholly free from variation and confusion, the common consent of the chronologers has drawn up a sufficient guide for our annual reckoning. We follow from this time the chronology of Varro among the ancients, and of Clinton and Fischer—indeed the generally received chronology—among the moderns, and put aside the disputed points which it would be unsuitable to discuss in a compendium of Roman history.

On the expulsion of their king the Romans at once elected L. Junius Brutus and L. Tarquinius Collatinus consuls. It was

popularly asserted to the honour of these magistrates that they revived the Servian institutions most favourable to the plebeians; restored to them their own judges taken from their own order, with the right of appealing to the tribes, as the patricians had an appeal to the curies. They distributed among them many lots of the royal domain, and called up a hundred of them to the Senate, which had been decimated by the tyranny of the Tarquins. When Brutus was prematurely cut off in the very year of his consulship, his surviving colleague provided for the perpetuation of the form of government which by him mainly had been founded. Nevertheless, Valerius himself, the new consul, incurred suspicion of affecting sovereignty, by erecting his mansion on an eminence of the city. As soon, however, as the murmurs of the citizens were reported to him he caused the rising buildings to be destroyed, and contented himself with a modest cabin on the slope of the hill. He carried moreover a special decree by which royal rule was for ever interdicted in Rome. The very name of king and kingdom became from henceforth an abomination to the Romans. For this and other like tokens of his generous patriotism Valerius obtained the splendid title of Poplicola, never again held by a Roman, for never again did the liberties of Rome emerge from so perilous a crisis.

The war with the Etruscans under Porsena was renewed through three years, and B.C. 507 Rome either capitulated to the invader or finally repulsed him, according to which of the conflicting stories we prefer. At any rate our histories record no cessation of the foreign wars of the Romans. They continued to be constantly engaged in conflict with the Sabines and the Latins, and in the year 501 a dictator was for the first time created to strengthen the hands of the government. The title seems to have been taken from one in use among the Latins, to whom a corresponding office was familiar. Spurius Lartius was the first dictator of Rome. The two names bear perhaps the same meaning, and may indicate that the Romans were conscious of the superior power they were thus conferring upon their lord and master. In 496 a dictator was appointed a second time, in the person of Aulus Postumius, who fought the great battle of Regillus against the last confederacy raised against Rome by the exiled family.

Thus far the pressure of danger from abroad, if not the mutual balance of classes within the city, had kept peace and union between the two rival orders. But whatever indulgence might seem to have been shown to the plebeians, first by Servius and again by Brutus

and Valerius, it soon became apparent that they enjoyed no real equality, and indeed that their dearest rights were still liable to unjust and cruel invasion. A people that lives by the land transacts its business mainly by sale and barter. Money is the product of trade and commerce, but in all flourishing and advancing communities ready money affords the most direct means of opulence. The petty landowners of the Roman territory were constantly in want of the easy means of exchange required for their improvements in husbandry, for the payment of their rents and of the public charges. The men of small estate—and such were for the most part the plebeians—were constrained to come to their richer neighbours the patricians, who enjoyed not only broader lands, but almost all the offices of the state and the share of plunder thereto accruing, for the accommodation of loans of money. The Romans were from the first thrifty and close in their dealings, keen in traffic, usurious in lending. The code of commercial law which they exacted gave every advantage to the lender as against the borrower. It enabled him to seize upon the estate of his debtor to the last farthing; it further entitled him to lock up the bankrupt in prison, or sell him into slavery, with all his family; and lastly, if we may rely upon the plain letter of a famous enactment, it authorised a number of creditors, if the debtor's estate was not sufficient to satisfy their claims, to cut his body in pieces and take each his share. But the plebeians, as has been said, were for the most part the poorer class, and therefore the most liable to fall under the pains and penalties of indebtedness. The patricians seized their goods, and thrust them into prison, if they did not go to the extreme but unprofitable length of carving them in morsels. When one of these imprisoned debtors made from time to time his escape, and showed himself in the Forum in his rags and chains, it roused the fury of the commons to madness, and drove them at last to grave measures of retaliation.

It was one of the bravest of the centurions of the Roman army who had thus made his escape and proclaimed his wrongs to his indignant countrymen. At the same moment an incursion of the Volsci was announced. The consuls of the year 495, the haughty Appius Claudius, the first of a race notorious in many later generations for its pride and cruelty, and with him the popular Servilius, summoned the people to arms. The plebs refused to enlist, and defied the law. The consuls yielded for the moment, promised redress of grievances, suppressed the rising mutiny, led forth the legions, and defeated the enemy; but the Senate refused to perform

the promises made for it, and threatened to create Appius dictator, and give him power without appeal over the exasperated multitude. In the succeeding year this threat was executed; a dictatorship was proclaimed for the suppression of the sedition, but the choice of the senate fell upon Valerius Volesus, a milder and wiser man. The plebeians had collected in a body and seceded to the Mons Sacer, an eminence three miles distant from the city; from thence they seem to have soon returned and occupied the more menacing position of the Aventine, within the walls. The crisis was worthy of the famous incident which followed, when Menenius Agrippa, sent as an envoy to them with the most dignified chiefs of the Senate, related the apologue of the members and the belly, and persuaded them of the mutual interdependence of the rival classes. This time the Senate acted with good faith: the imprisoned debtors were set free, and the insolvent relieved from their obligations.

U.C. 260.

B.C. 494.

According to the colour which tradition gives to this event, the quarrel lay not so much between the patricians and plebeians, as rival orders in the commonwealth, as between the richer and the poorer classes, for even of the plebeians not a few had by this time risen to wealth, and no doubt exercised the law of debtor and creditor to the full as harshly as the patricians. But at the next shifting of the scene we find the plebeians as a body turning the success of the secession to their general advantage. The plebeians were excluded by law from the consulship, but they now insisted upon securing for themselves the protection of a magistrate of their own order, whose power should at least balance that of the patrician executive. The assemblies of the citizens in the centuries were impeded by the power claimed by the patricians to subject them to religious ideas and ceremonies, controlled by a priesthood who were themselves almost universally of the higher order. The plebeians acquired a check upon this privilege by demanding that officers of their own choice should be invested with personal inviolability, and that while they could put a veto on the action of the Senate, anyone who assailed them in the execution of their office should be declared accursed, and his property confiscated.

The institution of the tribunes, such was the name of these magistrates, was a crisis that affected the whole subsequent history of Rome. First, it kept the consuls in check; in time it acquired for the plebs a share in all the privileges of the populace, and at length effected a fusion of the rival orders of the early commonwealth. When, after the great conquests of Rome, the struggle

of classes lay no longer between patricians and plebeians, but between the aristocracy or the nobles and the heterogeneous populace who constituted the mass of citizens, this institution supported again the cause of the multitude, and secured its final triumph in the establishment of the Empire. The emperors themselves assumed the name and office of tribunes, and as such claimed a legal prerogative for the protection of popular rights; and they in their turn converted their prerogative into an instrument for admitting the provinces to the privileges of the city, and transforming all the subject races of the Empire into Roman citizens. Truly the secession to the Mons Sacer was 'not a revolt, but a revolution.' It was fitting that an event on which such issues depended, however little they may have been at the time foreseen, should be celebrated with special solemnities. Vows were made and sacrifices offered, and the ministrations of the *fecials* invoked, as at the conclusion of peace between two hostile forces. The compact between the two orders was invested with peculiar sanctity under the title of the *LEGES SACRATÆ*. An altar was erected to Jove the Thunderer, under which name the 'best and chiefest' of the gods was held in especial veneration. To Menenius, as the author of the happy reconciliation, the highest honours were paid during his lifetime, and a public funeral decreed at his death. The plebeians chose for their first tribunes the men who had led them to victory, a Sicinius and a Brutus; and thus a second time had a Brutus saved the commonwealth.

CHAPTER VII.

First struggle of the plebeians for a share of the public lands—Their part espoused by the consul Spurius Cassius—The stories of the Fabii and the battle at the Cremera, of Coriolanus, and of Cincinnatus—Constant wars between Rome and the neighbouring tribes, the *Æqui*, the *Volsci*, and the *Veientes*, and the losses she suffered.

THE elder Brutus had gained the admiration of the whole Roman people by the stand he had made against a tyranny which affected the whole; but he had earned the title of a popular champion more particularly by the assignments of public land which he had obtained for the plebeians. In this, it is true, he had only followed the example of the kings themselves, for the kingly power had generally favoured the lower class to strengthen itself against the upper. But

after the popular stroke of Brutus our history represents the consuls, with the patricians at their back, as sternly withholding all further concession to their rivals, and the plebeians, harassed by constant war, and impoverished by debt, in vain longing for the share of the common property to which they deemed themselves entitled. That the strong feelings which led to the demand for an agrarian law should have sprung up in a period of less than twenty years is hardly intelligible; it seems more probable that the history, or rather the legend of the time, has here compressed into a narrow space a cry which was really of much longer development. We are told, however, that Spurius Cassius, who held the consulate B.C. 493, the year of the first appointment of tribunes, assumed to himself the part of a popular leader, and was the first to recommend the enactment of a fresh division of lands in the interest of the commons. The principle of the famous agrarian laws, which perform so great a part in the history of Rome, and have given a common name to movements often of a very different character in later times, requires to be reviewed in this place in connexion with the circumstances out of which they arose.

The members of the Roman Commonwealth, at the earliest period to which we can trace their political combination, were accustomed, we may suppose, to go forth to battle under the chief of their choice, to combat for their common interests, and to share the plunder among them. The *Ager Romanus*, or Roman territory, was from the first divided more or less equally among the Roman people. But when the leader of this armed force acquired the character of a king or permanent ruler, there attached to him the idea of a representative of the whole community, and the ultimate possessor of the conquered lands, which he divided among his followers as a feudal sovereign among his vassals. Whether the state was thus lord-paramount, or whether the king was himself the state, in either case the holder of all newly-acquired territory came to be regarded as an occupier or tenant only, enjoying it indeed at a nominal rent, and on an indefinite lease, but still liable, at least in theory, to be dispossessed by the same power under which he held his land in fee. From the first the patricians, as the genuine citizens of the state, claimed an exclusive right of occupation, while they gladly let the ultimate right of the state to resume the lands it leased to them fall into abeyance. But the plebeians continued from time to time to clamour for a share in this enviable privilege. From time to time, as new lands fall under the sway of

the Roman state, the kings, as we have seen, made some such concessions in their favour. But if at any time the progress of conquest was relaxed, the plebeians, still clamouring as before for land as the surest and almost the only source of wealth obtainable, might urge the state to exercise its undoubted legal right, and resume some portion of the estates surrendered to the patricians, making a fresh distribution of it in their interest. It seems not unlikely that in the first years after the expulsion of the kings the progress of Roman conquest was thus checked, and the territory of the state may possibly have been even narrowed. Accordingly the cry of the plebeians waxed louder and louder. Spurius Cassius suggested, it would seem, the policy of redistribution, and concerted with the tribunes the introduction of an 'agrarian law' for that purpose. He required the state to divide among the poorer citizens a portion of its own actual property, and at the same time to require from the occupiers of other portions strict payment of their legal rent or tithe, with which to furnish a regular stipend to the citizens when called to arms. If such were really the demands of Cassius we may justly regard him as a wise and virtuous statesman, who, after establishing the security of the state in its relations abroad by a treaty with the Latins and Hernicans, studied to anticipate at home, by a just liberality, the troubles which the poverty and discontent of the populace might have engendered. The policy, it may be remarked, of giving public pay to the forces of the commonwealth in the field was new, and possibly at this time premature. This part of the Cassian programme was not, in fact, adopted till nearly a century later.

But these popular and patriotic demands aroused the indignation of the Senate. The usurpation—for such we are taught to regard it—of the *ager publicus*, against which Cassius contended, was the main source of the wealth and power of the patricians. In those primitive ages the same feeling prevailed on this subject as we find even now among ourselves. Long and undisturbed occupation is sure to be regarded by those who benefit from it in the light of actual possession. It was in vain that Roman law distinguished from the first between Quiritary land—that which was actually given out and out, and the public land, which was only let on a lease terminable though indefinite. But, disturbed and angry as they were, the circumstances of the time did not permit the patricians to resist. Cassius himself was popular and powerful: with the tribunes at his back he could overcome all opposition. They could do no more than

spread false charges of treason or incivism against him, and accuse him of surrendering the interests of the state to the public enemy abroad and to false citizens at home. Though impotent to resist his measures, they succeeded in blasting his reputation and undermining the favour in which he was held. Like many other popular

U.C. 269.

B.C. 485.

champions who descend from their own class to take the lead of those below it, he was eventually abandoned by the very men whose cause he had asserted, and suffered the last penalty of public scourging and beheading at the hands of the consular lictors.

It was easier, however, for the patricians to rid themselves of a single champion who had renounced the interests of his own order, than to prevent the repetition again and again of the same conduct; so just was the cause of the plebeians, or so brilliant the temptation to take the lead of a new, ardent, and rising force in the commonwealth. On the fall of Spurius Cassius the senators repudiated the execution of the laws he had extorted from them. The plebeians were paralysed by the loss of the chief whom they had themselves deserted. Their opponents put forth the best and strongest of their own party to take their lead as consuls. For seven successive years they raised one of the house of the Fabii to the supreme magistracy. The tribunes cried out for the promised distribution of lands; and Menenius threatened to put his veto on the levy of troops. But the consuls betook themselves beyond the walls of the city, where the protection of the tribunes did not extend, and summoning the citizens before them, caused them to be there enlisted, not without threats and violence. They succeeded moreover in sowing division among their opponents, and gained over one tribune to neutralise the veto of his colleagues. The chiefs of the plebeians had still another card to play, and they threw it down desperately. They caused the soldiers to sheathe their swords in the face of the enemy. In the year 480, the legions refused to complete a victory over the Veians in order to deprive Kæso Fabius, the consul, of the honour of a triumph.

But straightway we hear of the defection of the Fabii. They go over to the people, and next are compelled to quit Rome as exiles. Had the senators become jealous of their long career of honours? or had the brighter prospects of the popular cause seduced them from their party allegiance? Under M. Fabius, however, the citizens again rallied loyally to the combat, and overthrew the Etruscans in 479. The popularity of these new leaders waxed more and more. In the following year Kæso Fabius was elected

consul through the suffrages of the people, which overwhelmed the opposition of the offended patricians. Kæso, who had been the actual accuser of Cassius, now undertook to enforce the laws of Cassius against the Senate. But he too was baffled by their obstinate resistance, and escaped perhaps the fate of the tribune only by retiring with his whole gens in a body into voluntary exile. The Fabii established themselves on the banks of the Cremera, a few miles to the north of Rome, in face of the hostile Veians, and there maintained the war of the commonwealth with their own gallant band, 306 in number, and with 4,000 clients. In this chivalrous and unequal contest they were at last over-
U.C. 277.
B.C. 477.
powered and exterminated. The name of the Fabii survived only in the person of a single child who had been left behind at Rome as unfit for the desperate service to which his clansmen devoted themselves.

The disgust of the people at the slaughter of their champions was heightened by the rumour that the consul Menenius had stood by and refused to assist them. Again they rose in anger and power, and extorted from the Senate the right to cite even the consuls themselves before the assembly of the tribes, in which the plebeians were paramount. This assembly moreover could be held without the permission of the Senate and the sanction of the augurs. They thus took possession of a weapon which they could use effectively. Within less than twenty-seven years seven consuls, it is said, and many of the most illustrious patricians, were thus accused and condemned, or driven into exile or to a voluntary death.

The contest between the two orders which has been thus briefly sketched seems to grow step by step with a natural development of cause and effect. But this completeness will be somewhat blurred if we introduce an incident which one of our historians plainly records and we can hardly refuse to place upon our pages. We are assured by Dionysius that in the year 481, when Kæso was holding the third of the long series of Fabian consulships, and the patrician reaction seemed to be at its height, the plebeians, after much and grave discussion, effected a compact with their adversaries, by which while one consul was to be appointed by the curies, the other should be the choice of the comitia of the centuries. If the plebeian party had really been so powerful in this assembly as they have been represented it would seem doubly strange that the consuls should have continued for many succeeding

years to be of the patrician order only. The Fabii still held their pre-eminent position; a Manlius, an Æmilius, an Horatius, and a Menenius, were surely none of them plebeians. We may surmise perhaps that the increasing wealth of the patricians, nourished by the prerogative they had seized and so obstinately maintained, sufficed to gain them, through their numerous clients, a preponderance even in the centuries. Accepting the statement just noticed, we must suppose that the Servian constitution had failed in its intended object, and had ceased to secure to the plebeians an effective balance in the state.

And that such was the case may be further inferred from the turn which the keen controversy between the rival orders next took. The year 471 was rendered famous in the annals of the Roman commons by the enactment of the *lex Publilia*. This law received its title from Publius Volero, one of the tribunes, to whom the honour of the motion is referred, while his colleague Lætorius mainly carried it through by his greater energy and resolution. In these qualities he seems to have borne the palm against no unworthy rival, the haughty Appius. Two years before the tribune Genucius had been slain; it was believed, at least, that he was murdered in his bed during the progress of a popular struggle. But Lætorius, nothing daunted, defied the intrigues of his adversaries, and even threatened Appius with arrest. He rendered the people masters of the Forum, and seized the Capitol. At three bounds the commons had planted themselves on the Mons Sacer, on the Aventine, and on the central stronghold of the Tarpeian hill. So it was that the two plebeians, well supported by the armed populace of the city, forced at last upon the reluctant Senate a measure by which the tribunes should be elected henceforth by the *comitia* of the tribes, and no longer by the centuries. The centuries, in which wealth was predominant, had fallen under patrician influence; but the tribes polled man by man, and the numbers of the plebs gave it an overwhelming advantage in the *comitia tributa*. At the same time the number of the tribunes themselves was increased from two to five, and so many more prizes held forth for the pursuit of popular favour.

Nevertheless the contest between the two orders or parties in the state continued with unabated violence, and with alternate success, for each possessed weapons which the other was unable to parry. It was in vain that the tribune Spurius Icilius established the right of the commons to enact by plebiscite, or popular resolution,

U.C. 283.

B.C. 471.

that to interrupt a tribune while addressing the assembly should be a capital offence. The Senate, under the direction of Appius, declared war against the Æqui and Volsci, and the plebeians were constrained to serve under his orders, and subjected to discipline of redoubled severity. In the camp the consul was paramount, and he treated his plebeian recruits as more than half-rebels; but in the field they reasserted their freedom by actual revolt, and even threw down their arms in the crisis of battle. Appius did not hesitate to chastise them with unsparing severity. They submitted with sullen desperation to the rods and axes of the lictors. But they too in their turn might expect a day of vengeance. The campaign must draw to a close at last; the consul must return to Rome; within the walls he must lay down his military authority, and fall himself under the civil authority of the tribunes. He was, indeed, straightway cited to answer for his tyranny before the assembly of the tribes. He replied with invectives not less violent than his previous actions; but he knew that his fate was inevitable, and went home from the meeting to escape condemnation only by suicide. Thereupon ensued, as so often at Rome, a popular reaction, and the champion of the Senate was honoured by the people with the signs of a general mourning.

U.C. 284.
B.C. 470.

During the course of these intestine struggles we read of the annual renewal of foreign war against the Latins and the Hernicans, the Volsci and the Æqui. We can easily believe, indeed, that the Romans, who regarded the bearing of arms as their privilege and duty, and gained from the plunder of the enemy the land, the slaves, and the few moveable objects of value which alone constituted their wealth, should be constantly engaged in more or less regular warfare against any foe with whom they could come to blows. It was usual, no doubt, for the consul to lead forth his legions every spring into the plains beneath the Etruscan or Sabine hills and slay any opponent who presented himself while they were making free with his goods and chattels. But the legionaries of Rome were also her husbandmen. After every rapid excursion they hastened back to gather in their own harvests, and when these were secured their pressing greed was for the time blunted. In the autumn they exchanged the sword for the sickle; in the winter they rested and enjoyed their gains. Their desultory campaigns produced brilliant but not permanent successes. The pride of the great aristocratic families, which had furnished so many consuls to the state, exulted in the stories they could tell of the patriotic exploits of their own

heroes. We have noticed the legend of the Fabii, which shed a lustre on the Fabian house down to the end of the republic. We must not pass over unrecorded the legend of Coriolanus, a name, indeed, of more dubious patriotism, but of not less durable renown.

Caius Marcius Coriolanus was a proud patrician, descended from Ancus Marcius. He was one of the bravest of the brave ; and having taken Corioli, a city of the Volscians, had derived from thence the title which he has made illustrious—the first, indeed, ever borne by a Roman conqueror from the name of the place he had conquered. But he bore himself haughtily in the city, and despised the favour of the people. He was refused the consulship. He retaliated with petulance, and withheld supplies from the people in time of famine. Then he was impeached and condemned to banishment. ‘ Romans,’ he exclaimed, or so has Shakspeare made him exclaim—and we may well believe it—‘ Romans, I banish you ! ’ He abjured his citizenship, and threw himself into the arms of the Volsci whom he had beaten. The Volsci placed him at their head, and under his command penetrated far into the Roman territory, destroying the property of the commons, but sparing, as was observed, that of the senators. The Roman power was crippled by disunion ; there was no army to send against him. The people in an agony of terror deputed their chief men to meet and propitiate him. He was deaf to their entreaties. Then they charged their priests and augurs to mediate for them in the name of the gods of Rome. Still he was obdurate. At last there went forth from the city an array of Roman matrons headed by Veturia his mother, and his wife Volumnia, accompanied by his little children. The mother reproached, the wife entreated, the children pleaded mutely for his forgiveness, and so he bade the Volscians turn their faces homewards, and returned himself with them into exile. The event was celebrated by the dedication of a temple to the ‘ Women’s Goodspeed,’ and the truth of the legend attested thereby to a late period in Roman history. The recorded date of this episode in our narrative is the year 488 ; but if the romantic story itself deserves our credence at all, it has been argued that it belongs more probably to an era twenty years later.

Such was the most illustrious legend of the war with the Volsci. The contest with the Æqui furnished another not less dear to the memory of the Romans. In the course of the protracted struggle which Rome was now making against these two peoples, who blocked her territories on the west and north-west, and from the mountain

tracts they occupied descended, it may be supposed, constantly upon the plains of Latium, and ravaged the territory of the Romans themselves, the Æqui had managed to intercept an advancing force among their defiles and reduce the consuls to imminent danger of destruction. The people, in their alarm, declared that none could save them but L. Quinctius, one of their most noted warriors, and that he must be created dictator. It does not appear why this hero should at this moment of national peril have been found by the envoys despatched to him working with bare arms in his field. But so it was. Cincinnatus—such was the name by which he was commonly designated from the long hair he suffered to fall in curls about his shoulders—directed his wife to throw over him a mantle, that he might receive the officers of the commonwealth with due respect. Such was the simplicity of his habits, such the reverence he paid to the Roman city. Under the commission laid upon him he chose L. Tarquinius, the second bravest of the state, for his master of the horse, then by a sudden movement, with fresh levies, took the Æquians in the rear, and compelled them to a hopeless engagement and a complete surrender. The whole force of the enemy was led captive to Rome, and made to pass under the yoke—a rude structure of two upright and one transverse spear—while the dictator led his own army in triumph to the Capitol, enriched with spoils of which the consuls with their less fortunate contingents were allowed no share. It may be remarked that this is the first time that the name of Gracchus, famous afterwards in Roman history, appears in the annals of the city, and as belonging, not to a primitive Roman, but to an Æquian, through whom it may have passed to a branch of the plebeian Gens Sempronia.

U.C. 296.
B.C. 458.

Cincinnatus, the traditional model of honourable poverty, returned from his triumph to his plough and the cultivation of his plot of land. The general situation, it would seem, remained equally unchanged. The Æquians and the Volscians continued to press year by year upon the borders of the Roman territory; the one people established themselves upon Mount Algidus, the other on the Alban hill, and sometimes they were seen encamped within three miles of the Esquiline gate. Whatever degree of credence we may accord to the stories of her military prowess, we can hardly doubt that during the half-century that had followed the expulsion of her kings Rome had incessantly declined in power before the face of her enemies. Her allies the Latins, who had stood between her and them to the south and east, had lost thirteen out of their thirty

cities. Nor had she been less pressed herself on the side of Etruria. Ten miles to the north, beyond the Tiber, the fortress of Veii had sheltered a constant foe whom she had not the means of dislodging. We have seen how she had lost, through her own domestic feuds, the gallant band of the Fabii, and the outpost they had planted for her on her northern frontier. Again and again she opened fresh campaigns against the Veians, but with doubtful success. Once at least her own safety had been menaced, and the hill of Janiculum actually held for a moment against her. In the desperation of famine she had reasserted her strength, and routed her assailants. The consul Valerius had gained a second victory. The tide of invasion had been turned, and Manlius had actually commenced the siege of Veii, when in 473 a truce of forty years was effected between the contending parties, and breathing-time allowed to Rome, if she were wise enough to recover her strength by composing her intestine quarrels. But it was impossible that her position could be permanently strengthened as long as she was a prey to domestic discord and disunion. Yet it was amidst these chequered wars and these internal discords that she was forming the race of heroes whose bravery, whose resolution, and whose military obedience were to effect the conquest of the world. It is on this account that the obscure struggles of the early republic, both at home and abroad, deserve the rapid glance which we have been able to bestow upon them.

CHAPTER VIII.

Efforts of the plebeians to obtain equal laws with the patricians—Commission obtained with this view by Terentilius Harsa—Dissensions in the city—The Capitol seized by Appius Herdonius—The law of Icilius—Treachery of the patricians and murder of Dentatus—Appointment of the Decemvirs to prepare a national code—The Twelve Tables—Violence of Appius Claudius and story of Virginia—Character of the Decemviral legislation.

THE agrarian laws of the earlier tribunes had taken, it would seem, little effect; but the people acquiesced in their disappointment perhaps the more readily because the territory for division had rather diminished than increased, and in the face of the constant ravages of the enemy had for the most part become less an object of greed. On another point, however, the plebeians had a real grievance, and

to this they now more directly addressed themselves. The civil law of Rome at this period was the law of the primitive race, the law of the patricians only, and the patricians alone claimed the right of expounding it. In their dealings with one another the plebeians might follow a common law or custom of their own; but as against the rival order, the real masters of the state, or, as they still asserted of themselves, the state itself, the commons, as the inferior or vassal race, had no standing in the law courts. The grand object now at last presented itself to the most large-minded of the plebeian chiefs, to effect the fusion of the Quiritary law, the primitive code of the patricians, with the equity or usage of the classes beneath, or now more truly beside them. The tribune Terentilius Harsa took the lead in this bold and politic movement. He began by proposing in the year 462 that a commission of five or ten persons should be appointed to define the power of the consuls, which was no less arbitrary in the tribunals at home than in the camp beyond the walls. The measure was of course delayed and thwarted. Foreign perils as well as internal dissension prevailed for a long time against it. Within the city this dissension broke out into open violence. In 460 the faction of the commons under the daring lead of the Sabine, Appius Herdonius, actually seized the Capitol by night, and was dislodged not without bloodshed. Kæso Quinctius, the son of Cincinnatus, distinguished himself for at least equal violence on the other side; but Virginius the tribune accused him before the people, and he only escaped the penalty of death by taking refuge in exile. It was, indeed, the large fine which the father paid for him on this occasion that reduced Cincinnatus to the poverty which was thus doubly honourable to him. But the plebeians were the gainers by this struggle. In 454 the tribune Icilius carried a measure for surrendering to the poorer commons the whole of the Aventine hill, which was public domain, and which became from this time entirely occupied by the second order. The Aventine, the loftiest, and next to the Capitoline reputed the strongest eminence in Rome, now constituted the citadel of the plebeians, and henceforth greatly increased their political consideration.

The plebeians boasted moreover a champion of their own to rival the prowess of a Coriolanus or a Cincinnatus. L. Sicinius Dentatus was one of a family which had led the people to the Mons Sacer, and made the most vigorous attacks on the patricians in their behalf. He was so distinguished for his personal valour as to have been designated the Roman Achilles; but, unlike the hero whom a

special charm had rendered invulnerable except in his heel, he had received no less than forty-five wounds in front in the hundred and twenty battles in which he had been engaged. The rewards he had gained and the triumphs in which he had partaken were in due proportion to his merits and his sufferings. As tribune in the year 452 he gained a victory over the opponents of his party, and compelled them at last to concede the measure pressed upon them by Terentilius. To himself, indeed, this victory was fatal, for the patricians vowed to get rid of him by any means; and at no distant period Q. Fabius, who commanded the army, caused him to be despatched by a band of soldiers with whom he was sent to reconnoitre the enemy. But his popular policy did not fail to bear fruit. Three commissioners, a Postumius, a Manlius, and a Sulpicius, all patricians, were sent to study and report on the civil laws of the Greeks. Whether, as the Romans of a later age imagined, they were actually deputed to visit Greece proper and Athens, the headquarters of public law in Greece, or whether their journey was really limited to the peoples of Greek descent in the South of Italy, we may accept the general truth of this curious incident, and conclude that at this period Rome did actually seek for principles of wise and liberal legislation from the superior civilisation, not of the Etruscans or the Carthaginians, but of the Greeks.

The salutary reformation thus begun rolled on apace. In the year 450 the consuls, the tribunes, the ædiles, and the quæstors, all the great magistrates of the city of either party, were

U.C. 304.
B.C. 450. summarily superseded by the ten commissioners, who, under the title of Decemvirs, were appointed to prepare the new code. To facilitate the movement the plebeians were content to waive the most precious of their conquests, the right of appeal from the consuls, while they acceded to the claim of the patricians, as recognised expounders of the existing law, to occupy all the places in the commission that should revise it. On March 15 that year the decemvirs entered on their office, and each of them exercised supreme authority with the lictors and its other insignia day by day in turn. The leading spirit among them was one Appius Claudius, according to some accounts the same whose boldness and haughtiness have been before noticed; but if the accounts we have followed be at all trustworthy, the elder Appius had perished twenty years earlier, and the chief of the decemvirs was another doubtless of the same race and of kindred spirit. The fanatical pride of the Appii Claudii (the nomen and the prænomen were generally borne together) was for many hundred years a constant tradition of Roman story.

At first, indeed, these new magistrates are said to have borne their honours meekly, and to have taken measures to secure the favour of the whole body of the people to their legislation. They promulgated in the course of the year ten tables of enactments compiled on the principles of Grecian jurisprudence. During their second year of office, however, when some of the more moderate of their number had given place to successors of a fiercer spirit, the prejudices of Appius prevailed, and two more tables were set forth, which altogether failed to obtain general approbation. Then it was that these ten tyrants, as they came to be regarded, constrained the people to go forth to battle, and effected by treachery the slaughter of their hero Dentatus. But it was the personal and more domestic crime of the cruel Appius that raised the people at last in fury against them. The well-known tragedy of Virginia need only be glanced at. Daughter of the noble plebeian Virginius, she was betrothed to the not less noble Icilius. Appius, inflamed with loose passion, sought to obtain her person by setting one of his clients to claim her as his own slave. Her friends appealed to the law and to testimony; but the audacious violence of the decemvir prevailed, and Virginia was adjudged to the wicked claimant, when her father, despairing of redress, took her for a moment aside from the crowd to the booths which skirted the Forum, and laying hold of a butcher's knife struck her dead at his feet. This done, he rushed away to the camp, proclaimed the deed to the legions, and prevailed on them to break up from their outposts on the frontier, hasten back to Rome, and occupy their stronghold on the Aventine. There or on the Mons Sacer they collected a vast following of the citizens, and combining with the forces of the Sabines, defied in full revolt the tyranny of their rulers. The decemvirs made a faint show of reducing the people to obedience. But they felt that the general sentiment was against them, and speedily relinquished their power. Two, however, of the number, Valerius and Horatius, repaired to the popular stronghold and promised the restoration of the tribunate, and the right of appeal. The comitia were held and tribunes elected for the plebeians, while Valerius and Horatius succeeded, as they so well deserved, to the consulship. The liberties of the people were assured by several enactments; but vengeance was still due to the blood which had been shed. Virginius accused the decemvirs. Appius killed himself in the prison to which he had been consigned. Oppius did the same. The others fled self-banished, and their property was confiscated. After this an amnesty was proclaimed

The whole nation, now firmly united, gained a decisive victory over the Æquians and the Sabines. Nevertheless the Senate, which had hitherto exercised the sole right of according triumphs, refused the honour, and it was by a special and irregular decree of the people that the popular consuls mounted to the Capitol. Such
U.C. 305.
B.C. 449. was one of the steps by which the tribunes slowly raised their order to an equal position with their rivals.

The law of Terentilius, as has been said, was directed to the establishment of new principles of legislation in the interest of the plebeians. We are tempted to suppose that it was intended to place the two orders under a common law as regarded their personal and proprietary, if not as yet their political rights also. For so, undoubtedly, the Grecian states, which were to furnish the model of the new system, were already in a more advanced social state when the political pretensions of the different orders out of which they had originally sprung had become fused for the most part together. But the slender fragments that remain to us of the laws of the twelve tables go but a little way to justify this conception; nor do the references made to them by the Romans themselves at a later period, when they were still in living force, and might be called by Livy 'the spring of all public and private law,' seem to bear it out. We can see, indeed, or seem to see, that in these enactments lay the foundation of the later Roman law; and if it were the purpose of these pages to give a full antiquarian history of Roman life and manners, it would be well to take this opportunity of explaining the groundwork at least of the Jus Civile; but the connexion between them and the circumstances out of which they are stated to have arisen—the rivalries, namely, of patricians and plebeians, and their conflicting claims and jealousies—seems actually so slight that it can only disappoint close scrutiny. It was no quarrel of class against class that was adjusted by the laws which specially secured to the father of a family his absolute power over his slaves, his children, his wife, and his property. The interests, indeed, of the plebeians might be somewhat more concerned with the enactments now made for the protection of the clients against the neglect of their patrons; for the clients of the patricians were gradually escaping from their patrons' authority, and throwing in their lot more and more with the plebeians. Some provisions that were now effected for the security of property, and for giving the actual possessor the fee simple after a short unopposed occupation, may indicate the gradual advance of the lower

order in territorial proprietorship; but the protection which the law was made to afford to property generally, as compared with that which it extended to the person, applied to all classes equally. It bespeaks the character of the Roman people, who could be trusted to defend themselves, but while constantly called away to serve their country were often obliged to leave home and land undefended; but it tells us nothing of the relative position of orders and classes among them. On the whole we must conclude, from a review of what little is known to us of the decemviral legislation, that it was to the personal equality of all classes in the eye of the law rather than to the equalising of political privileges that it pointed. The poor citizen was protected by special enactment against the usurious exactions of the wealthy creditor, the feeble was defended against the strong man in the law courts, the false witness and the corrupt judge were subjected to summary punishment, appeal was given to the people in full assembly against the unjust sentence of the patrician magistrate, and on the other hand the people themselves were enabled by a popular sentence to inflict capital punishment. Doubtless the importance of the comitia of the centuries was enhanced by such an authority conceded to it; but the centuries, as we have seen, represented wealth, in the tribes it was number alone that prevailed, and a great revolutionary principle was sanctioned in the decree that whatever the comitia of the tribes should determine should have the force of law for all the citizens. Hitherto the decision of the tribes could bind the plebeians only. In the face of such a power the comitia of the curies and the centuries soon gave way altogether.

CHAPTER IX.

Continuation of the struggle between the patricians and plebeians—The law of Canuleius gives the right of intermarriage, B.C. 445—The consuls replaced by military tribunes, B.C. 420—Crime and punishment of Sp. Mælius, B.C. 439—Victory at the Algidus over the Æqui and Volsci, B.C. 431—The great war with Veii—Military pay first given to the legionaries—Veii captured, B.C. 396, U.C. 358.

It is not, however, the laws of the decemvirs, but the Valerian laws that form the greatest era in the course of the Roman constitution. The decemviral legislation has partaken of the obscurity and uncertainty that hang over all the early Roman history, but from this period we may fairly allow ourselves to trust in the main to the

authorities that remain to us, if, at least, we can reconcile them one with another. It has not been the object of this succinct account to discuss the vexed question of the authenticity of the traditional narrative. Time is still wasted perhaps by the modern school of critical historians in demonstrating the contradictions of the old legends, and the abundant tokens they doubtless present of a late and spurious origin. The legends themselves are in numerous cases incredible; in few if any do they rest upon evidence which the critic can securely accept. There lies, however, a wide space between the story that is demonstrably false and that which is not demonstrably true, and to many portions of early Roman story, to some of the most attractive among them, we may fairly extend the benefit of the doubt, and admit that if we cannot affirm their truth they need not therefore be rejected, and may at least be often true in the spirit, true to the genius of the times and of the people, true in the lessons of Roman character which they inculcate, true, therefore, for the practical purpose of teaching us what manner of men those old Romans really were. The legends of early Rome have accordingly been treated here in a sympathetic spirit; the most salient points in them have been faithfully brought forward, but at the same time passed lightly over. We are permitted from this point to step with a somewhat firmer tread, which may afford satisfaction to the writer, but to the reader may possibly be productive of less entertainment. The details of history will now thicken upon us, and a great many of them it will be necessary in this sketch to mass together in generalities, or wholly to omit.

The continuance of the struggle between the rival orders which marks the period following upon the era of the decemvirs exhibits an apparent vacillation of purpose which requires explanation. The main purpose of the plebeians was directly and powerfully served by the thorough protection gained by their members against the violence of their opponents, and by the elevation of the comitia of the tribes to paramount legislative authority. But there was another object they now brought into notice, which may seem to run counter to the most obvious lines of their public policy. After many efforts a law was at last carried for them by the tribune Canuleius, by which the full right of marriage between the two orders was sanctioned. Already at an earlier period the patricians had conceded a legal sanction to unions between themselves and the plebeians; but in such cases it was provided that the issue of these unequal alliances should follow the fortunes of the inferior parent,

and become themselves plebeians, to whichever order the father belonged. It might be supposed that this arrangement, even if galling to the pride of the lower order, must have been felt as really advantageous to it, from the addition it gave to its numbers at the expense of its adversary; but such was not the view the plebeians seem to have taken, and the measure of Canuleius was intended to secure for them the admission of the children to the status of the patricians. We may discover the reason for this policy in the substantial superiority which the patricians continued to enjoy through the special functions which were originally assigned to them, and which in fact they actually retained for centuries. The religion of the Romans still centred in the patricians. To them belonged almost all the pontifical offices, and therewith the performance of the most indispensable functions on all public occasions. It was in vain that the plebeians extorted from their rivals complete equality of suffrage: the suffrages themselves could not be given by either the one or the other unless a patrician officer pronounced the omens favourable, and the assemblies of every class and order were liable to interruption if the priest or augur affirmed that they were unpropitious. Not only the conceit of superior sanctity, but the actual power which flowed from it, continued to be thus attached to the patricians, and it was to a share in this special prerogative that the plebeians looked the more keenly as their political equality became more clearly recognised.

For this religious status the patricians still persistently contended. The plebeians still found it impossible to obtain access to the consulship, the magistracy, which above all others was invested with a religious character, and was entrusted accordingly with the performance of functions which it would have been deemed profane for any but a patrician to exercise. But they gained a step in advance when in the year 420 they effected the change by which the annual consuls might be replaced by a board of officers called military tribunes, six in number, and for these plebeians were declared to be eligible. It was, however, an incomplete success. The functions of these tribunes, as their name imports, were mainly confined to the command of the legions; from the highest religious services they were still rigorously excluded. On many occasions the comitia preferred, from motives which cannot be discovered, to recur to the old form again, and yet further, even when military tribunes were appointed, they were still far more generally taken from the higher order than the lower. The arrangement, thus im-

perfectly carried out, lasted on the whole a period of about fifty years, and again the Roman people elected their annual consuls, and continued to do so uninterruptedly, under widely different forms of government, for many centuries.

Meanwhile, as before, the annals of the city present the accustomed succession of contests with the nations immediately about it, varied with internal dissensions. A second dictatorship of Cincinnatus, in the year 439, is signalised by the slaughter of Spurius Mælius by Servilius Ahala, the master of the horse. The crime of Mælius, according to the account, was an attempt to seize the government of the commonwealth and make himself king or tyrant. This odious charge was easily made, and whether just or not, was sure to excite the jealousy of the Roman citizens of all classes. It was a good stroke of policy on the part of the patricians to alarm their opponents by misrepresenting the objects of the men who undertook to be their champions. Nevertheless the government still required a strong hand to wield it, and the three dictatorships of Mam. Æmilius followed in quick succession.

U.C. 323.

B.C. 431.

Another dictator, Aulus Postumius, gained a crowning victory over the Æqui and Volsci, at the Mount Algidus, and vindicated the firmness of Roman discipline by ordering the execution of his own son, who had fought and conquered, but against his orders. The arms of the Romans began now to be turned in another direction.

Rome, it seems, had discovered a dangerous rival in the Etruscan city of Veii, a strong hill-fortress, about twelve miles beyond the Tiber. Against this adversary her forces were now mainly arrayed. The war with Veii lasted, with short intervals of time, for thirty years; and was at last decided in favour of Rome after a siege of ten years' duration. During this period the military policy of the republic underwent some important modifications. For the first time she determined, as in the case of the city of Fidenæ, to punish an obstinate and perhaps a revolted enemy by a measure of ruthless extermination. The plan succeeded only too well, and was too often repeated in later times. The planting of military colonies, as at Ardea, and Velitræ, was also a novelty. Hitherto the Romans, if we may credit our accounts, were wont to transplant conquered peoples to their own city; but now, and in innumerable cases afterwards, they transferred a number of their own fellow-citizens to foreign sites, and established them upon the forfeited lands of the enemy. The practice was, for a usage of war, sufficiently legitimate,

and it became undoubtedly a genuine source of strength to the conquering nation. But in this interval also for the first time was the practice introduced of giving military pay to the legions. The Roman in arms might become now a regular soldier. Hitherto every citizen capable of bearing arms was liable to the general conscription, and required to serve in the ranks according to his means or census. But this hard law was mitigated by the regular custom of confining the campaign to the spring or summer months. The conscript returned home to reap his fields, and in the winter enjoyed the fruits of his harvest. It was the necessity of maintaining a force constantly under arms through the year, in order to press the so-called siege of Veii, which constrained the magistrates of the commonwealth to furnish the troops required for the service with the pay of the state. This was the first step, but a decisive one, towards the establishment of a standing army, and of a regular profession of arms. Without it the leaders of the legions could never have advanced the eagles far beyond the sight of the seven hills; but with it followed in inevitable sequence the elevation of the leaders themselves into candidates for sovereign power. The siege of Veii foreshadowed the fall of the republic.

The conquest of Veii was thus far the most splendid achievement of the Roman arms. It was celebrated in the earliest annals, and possibly in the popular songs of the nation, and there is a peculiar solemnity attending upon the accounts of it which have been delivered to us. The ten years' siege was likened in the popular imagination to that of Troy, and the gods were supposed to have evinced their interest in the one as in the other by prophecies and omens and providential interferences. The overflow of the Alban lake was esteemed a prodigy of deep significance; the priests required that its waters should be carried off by numerous channels, but not allowed to find their own way to the sea. If the Romans succeeded in penetrating into the city by a mine carried beneath the walls, tradition attached to this simple incident an array of supernatural circumstances. The mine, it seems, conducted them actually to the temple of Juno, the tutelary deity of the Veians. Amidst the tumult of a general assault Camillus himself leads the way through this subterranean gallery, and emerges within the sacred precincts. At that moment the Veian king was consulting the gods; the aruspex declared that he should be the victor who should first offer sacrifice on the altar before him. At the words the Roman springs forth and strikes the victim presented for slaughter. Veii falls at

once into his hands; the people are massacred or sold as slaves, their riches plundered or confiscated. Never had the Romans gained such glory or such a booty. Camillus himself is terrified at his own too great felicity. He deprecates the wrath of the Avengers, and as he turns round to face the proper quarter of the heavens makes a false step and falls. 'Enough,' he exclaims; 'the gods are satisfied with this fall.' He had vowed a temple to the Veian Juno on the Aventine, but no one dared to remove her image to its new abode. A troop of noble Romans, clothed in white, presented themselves before it, and demanded the consent of the goddess. The words 'I consent' were plainly heard, and the statue itself moved along of its own accord. None of the three hundred triumphs of Rome was more justly celebrated than that in which the conqueror of Veii ascended to the Capitol in his gilded chariot drawn by four milk-white horses.

The gods, however, had not been satisfied by the fall of Camillus. The people for whom he had done so much turned ungratefully against him. They charged him with detaining a tithe U.C. 358. of the spoil as an offering vowed to Apollo, with a design B.C. 396. for removing the population of Rome from its ancient seats to his new conquest. Menaced with a public prosecution he withdrew into exile; but as he passed through the gates he turned round and uttered a prayer, or rather a malediction, invoking the gods to bring his compatriots to speedy repentance. And so they did: the Roman legends have always an epigrammatic sting: the same year the Gauls entered Rome.

CHAPTER X.

The Gaulish invasion of Italy—Battle of the Allia and burning of Rome—Victory of Camillus: U.C. 364, B.C. 390.

THE long-protracted contest of the Romans with the Æqui and Volsci had been really a struggle in self-defence, but this the pride of the great conquerors refused in after-times to acknowledge, and they piqued themselves on the glory with which their victorious arms had been always accompanied. The contest with the Gauls which now followed they allowed to have concerned the national existence. The Gauls, indeed, were a mighty people. Under this general name might be comprehended the great mass of the Celtic

race, not without much admixture of Iberian and even of Teutonic blood, which occupied the West of Europe from the Rhine to the Atlantic. From the dawn of history at least this people had been constantly pressed upon by the advancing hordes of Germany, and behind these of Sarmatia and Scythia; but the elasticity of the Gallic population had from time to time thrown off this pressure, and rebounded against it with an advance in the contrary direction. Nevertheless the progress of mankind from East to West has been seldom arrested. The opposite movement has been generally fitful and capricious, and subject to repeated reverses. From the sixth century before our era even to the present day the Gauls have made their spasmodic inroads upon countries to the eastward, but in the end they have been invariably repulsed, and either thrown back within their former limits, or subjected upon the soil they have once occupied to the yoke of the dominant races over which they had for a moment prevailed.

According to our accounts it was in the year B.C. 521 that a vast emigration from the centre of Gaul arrived after rapid conquests upon the banks of the *Æsis* in Italy. This little stream, flowing into the Adriatic a few miles above Ancona, and at some distance to the south of the Rubicon, was the ultimate point to which the Gallic settlements reached. The invaders had established themselves throughout the great valley of the Padus, and had turned the head of the Apennines in their progress southward. Thus far they had been successful in overwhelming the remains of the Etruscan domination, which at an earlier period had occupied all the north of Italy to the Alps. At the moment at which we are now arrived these restless warriors, who fought for slaves and cattle and gold, rather than for lands to cultivate and cities to dwell in, were pressing by a flank movement upon the Etruscans south and west of the Apennines, which at this point afforded them little shelter. Brennus led the Gauls against Clusium. The Romans, foreboding the danger, sent envoys to check their advance by negotiation. The Gauls would listen to no counsel, but pressed the attack, and the Roman officers, three distinguished men of the Fabian Gens, rashly abandoning their character as ambassadors, assisted the Etruscans in their defence. The Gauls appealed to the laws of war, and exclaimed against this treachery. Even at Rome the guilt of the Fabii was not unacknowledged. The *fecials* demanded that they should be given up. But against this sacrifice the pride of the Romans revolted. It was determined to defy the Gauls, who were already

advancing, and an army was sent forward, which confronted them on the banks of the Allia. At this spot, eleven miles above Rome on the left bank of the Tiber, was fought the famous battle U.C. 364. in which the Romans were entirely routed, and a small B.C. 390. remnant of their legions driven headlong back to the city. To the advance of the Gauls no further resistance could be made. The defence even of the walls was abandoned. The fugitives crowded into the Capitol, carrying with them only such effects as they could seize in their tumultuary flight, and almost the next day the Gauls entered Rome. The defeat, the rout, the panic were all disgraceful, but the Romans consoled themselves in after-times by the proud story they invented, that the senators seated in the Forum in their chairs of office received the invader with dignified composure, and for a moment overawed him. It was not till one of the Gauls, who impertinently stroked the white beard of the aged Papirius, was stricken to the ground with a blow of the senator's ivory-headed staff, that the barbarians gave loose to their savage nature and ruthlessly massacred the whole august assembly.

The city was now given up to pillage and fire, but the Capitol was still preserved. The Gauls, repulsed in their first furious assault, were devoid of the means of forming a regular siege. They set themselves down around it to reduce it by weariness or famine. But now the gods turned to the side of the devoted city. The Fabii had brought it to the brink of ruin, but one of the same house descended boldly from the citadel, crossed the ridge which connected it with the Quirinal, and there, in the very face of the enemy, performed the expiatory rites which the occasion was deemed to require. He then returned in safety, and from that moment Rome was safe also.

Another daring champion betook himself to human succour, and this time it was a plebeian who performed the service without which the city could not have been rescued from the foe. Pontius Cominius glided swiftly down the escarpment of the Tarpeian rock, swam the Tiber, and conveyed to Camillus at Veii the invitation of the penitent Romans to come as dictator to their rescue. The Gauls, however, observed the marks of his feet on the face of the cliff, and attempted by their guidance to scale it in force during the night. Secure in their natural defences at this point, the Romans had neglected to crown the rock with a rampart, or even to set a guard over it. The assailants were on the point of bursting into the citadel, undiscovered by man or dog, when the wakeful geese

which were tended in the temple of Juno gave the alarm; the defenders sprang to arms, and hurled the Gauls from their slippery footing. Manlius, a patrician, was the first to hear and the foremost to repel them, and on him was conferred the title of Capitolinus, as the saviour of this sacred fortress. The alternate choice of a patrician and plebeian to render these precious services is a trait in the legend worth remarking, nor less so the circumstance that the patrician in each case is sustained by divine assistance; the plebeian relies upon the help of man alone.

Nor was the help of man unavailing. Camillus accepted the call of his countrymen, unworthy as he might deem them. He collected an army from the remnant of the legions of the Allia and the fugitives from the city, and advanced with all speed to their relief. Meanwhile, however, they had been reduced to the last extremity, and compelled to ask for terms of capitulation. The Gauls had consented to accept a sum of gold and retire. They were engaged in weighing out the sum required, and Brënnus, in his insolence, was casting his sword into the opposite scale, exclaiming, 'Woe to the worsted!' when Camillus suddenly appeared before them with his gallant warriors, and annulled the treaty which the people, he said, had no power to make without the consent of the dictator. The Gauls shrank from the encounter and retired, but he pursued and brought them to bay, and finally routed and dispersed them. Such, according to the popular legend, was the end of the Gaulish invasion; but the Romans themselves placed little faith in it. It served to point a theme for poets and declaimers; but historians and public men were generally fain to admit that the city was actually reduced to subjection for a season, and that the Gauls ultimately withdrew with all the booty they chose to retain, when they cared no longer to quarter themselves on the soil they had ravaged and impoverished. That such was really the case we can have little doubt; at the same time, from the rapid disappearance of all traces of the Gaulish inroad south of the Apennines, it may be believed that the small band of invaders was gradually driven back or destroyed by the native races.

A tradition, however, to which a special interest attaches, related further that Camillus placed in the vaults of the Capitol, as a sacred deposit, the gold which the Romans had already laid down for their ransom. Such a treasure was undoubtedly kept there, and specially reserved for the purpose of repelling any future Gaulish invasion. When Julius Cæsar rifled the treasury he found and appropriated

this reserve to his own exigencies. 'There is no more fear of a Gaulish invasion,' he exclaimed, 'I have conquered Gaul.'

The popular legend of the taking of Rome has all the appearance of a poetical rhapsody. Nevertheless, that it has a more solid foundation than most of the earlier legends there can be little doubt. That Rome was once sacked by a horde of Gauls from beyond the Apennines may be regarded as sufficiently proved. The manner in which the city was rebuilt, so hastily and carelessly that the lines of the new streets often crossed the sewers of the older, seemed to attest the general fact to the Romans of a later generation. Modern critics have verified it from the apparent loss of almost every earlier monument of history and antiquity. No such catastrophe again occurred till the final overthrow of the city by the Northern nations. From this date the records of Rome make a new start, her annals are complete without a break, and the memorials of her deeds thicken before us. Camillus, the second founder, as he was gratefully entitled, of the city, was in fact the original founder of historic Rome.

CHAPTER XI.

Continued quarrels of the two orders—The cause of the plebeians espoused by Manlius—His overthrow by the dictator Cossus—The Licinian law carried by the tribunes—One of the consuls to be henceforth always a plebeian—Institution of the prætors and curule ædiles—Death of Camillus, B.C. 365, in a great pestilence—Lectisternium and alleged devotion of Mettus Curtius.

CAMILLUS, said the Romans, was the second founder of Rome; Romulus might be the hero of many a poetic lay, the object of many a religious service, but the deserts of Camillus fell in nowise short of the praises bestowed upon Romulus. It was he who withheld the people from abandoning in despair the ruins of their city, and betaking themselves in a body to their new conquest of Veii. It was he who caused Veii, which he had himself subdued, to be dismantled stone by stone, and the materials employed in the rebuilding of her rival. From the ruins of the city were recovered the augural staff of Romulus, the twelve tables of the law, and some fragments of older legislation and of ancient treaties. Such were the remains of the old Roman polity with which the commonwealth was to be reconstructed. But the void created in the population itself, the draining of the lifeblood of the body politic, was a

matter of greater moment. Camillus again, as the moving spirit of the Roman people, may enjoy the credit of the wise liberality with which the rights of the city were accorded to the people of Veii, of Capena, and of Falerii, of whom four new tribes were composed and added to the existing list. With this accession of strength opportunely given Rome was enabled to meet in arms the ancient enemies on her border, the Æqui and Volsci, the Etruscans and the Latins, who are said to have all, together or in turn, attacked her from day to day, and reduced her once more to a prolonged and desperate struggle for the existence she had so gallantly recovered. Even the colonies of Rome banded themselves against her, but Antium and Velitræ were crushed, along with Circeii, Lanuvium, and Præneste, by Camillus and the not less valiant Cossus and Quinctius. Fresh colonies were planted at Sutrium and Nepe, and again and again dictators 'created for the war' won a triumph over every foreign enemy.

In the year B.C. 385 Cornelius Cossus was created dictator to suppress an intestine commotion. The quarrels of the two orders were still periodically resumed, but the disastrous wars with the Gauls seem to have now produced the same effect as that against Porsena, in the impoverishment of the lower class, and the heavy pressure of debts they had incurred to the great proprietors. Again the creditors exercised their rights harshly, and the people complained that the *ergastula* or slave-barracks were filled with their captives. Camillus himself was severe in his exactions. Marcus Manlius Capitolinus, according to the story, was jealous of his renown, and impatiently flung himself into the cause of the oppressed. He distinguished himself by delivering 400 debtors from prison. The rich men determined to rid themselves of him, and armed Cossus with powers to quell the sedition they accused him of promoting. Cossus threw him into chains, but again released him, and it was not till two of the tribunes had been gained over, and induced to charge him with treason, that the government ventured to proceed against him. When it was proclaimed that the man who had but just served the commonwealth was conspiring for its overthrow and the establishment of a kingly tyranny, the people readily deserted him, and he perished by the traitor's death, being flung from the Tarpeian rock. The house which the state had given him on the Capitoline was razed to the ground, and the Manlian Gens resolved that none of their house should ever again assume the prænomen of Marcus.

U.C. 370.
B.C. 384.

Whatever be the value of this popular story, it stands by itself with no results attached to it. It was otherwise with the movement of C. Licinius Stolo, and L. Sextius, created tribunes of the people in B.C. 377, and re-appointed for ten successive years, until their courage and perseverance gained at last a signal victory.

This event, which may be accepted as substantially true, is introduced by Livy, following no doubt the old chronicles of the city, by a story too characteristic of the methods of early Roman history to be omitted, however open it may be in itself to the distrust with which modern criticism has received it. L. Fabius Ambustus, a senator of rank and reputation, had given his daughters in marriage, the one to Sulpicius, a patrician, and the other to the plebeian tribune Licinius. In fortune, in rank, in fame the two husbands might be equal, but the one suffered under the brand of social disparagement in comparison with the other. Irksome as this might be to Licinius, it was doubtless doubly irksome to Licinius's wife. She happened to be visiting one day at the house of her sister, and when a lictor knocked formally at the door of Sulpicius, who held at the time the office of military tribune in the place of consul, expressed her innocent surprise at a ceremony with which, as a plebeian's wife, she was unfamiliar. The consort of the ennobled patrician laughed scornfully at the ignorance of her ignoble sister, who complained with tears to her husband and her father, and engaged them to combine in effecting a reform which should raise her to an equality with her haughty rival. Such, it is pretended was the secret history of the contest which resulted in the carrying of the great Licinian law, and the final establishment of the plebeians on an equal footing with the patricians. No doubt any such attempt to explain an important public event by a trifling domestic cause is liable to grave suspicion. It is not in the early legendary period of the Roman annals only that such fictions may be expected; they are almost equally rife in periods of solemn and accredited history. If we meet with such an anecdote in the time of Cæsar or Constantine we shall dwell as lightly upon it as now when it occurs under the early commonwealth of Rome.

The rogations or resolutions which the tribunes proposed to embody in the constitutional law of the city were three in number. First, to meet the pressing clamour of the day, they demanded that the burden of private debt should at least be alleviated by the remission of interest, a scheme wild in itself, but quite in the spirit of the age and of the actual state of society. Secondly, they re-

quired that the principle of the agrarian laws, so long urged, should be carried into effect; that the occupation of public land by any single citizen should be limited to 500 jugera, about 320 acres; and that none should feed on the public pastures more than a certain number of cattle; further, that small lots of land to the extent of seven jugera should be assigned to all poor citizens. These were points which had been urged before, and perhaps from time to time conceded, and the same might occur again, with little actual result, but the third resolution, that thenceforth one of the two consuls should always be a plebeian, bore in it the seeds of a real political revolution. It was against this demand that the senators and patricians vigorously exerted themselves. They appealed once more to the venerable Camillus, and adjured him to exercise the powers of a dictator to suppress the invasion of their prerogatives. But the veto of the tribune prevails against the imperium of the dictator. Even Camillus is constrained to abdicate his office and withdraw from the struggle. The tribes in their assembly sanction the laws of Licinius; the centuries elect L. Sextius for their plebeian consul; the assembly of the curies retaliates by withholding from him the imperium, the prerogatives of which were conferred with religious ceremonies. Civil war is on the point of breaking out, when Camillus, returning from a last decisive victory over the Gauls, interposes with the authority of his eighty years of age and sixty years of invaluable services. To his instances the Senate at length yields; the election of Sextius is confirmed, and Camillus, having saved the state a third time, closes the long era of internal discord by the dedication of a temple to Concord.

U.C. 387.
B.C. 367.

The year 366, which saw the election of the first plebeian consul in the person of L. Sextius, and was thus rendered notable in Roman history for the auspicious fusion of the two rival orders, witnessed moreover the institution of the magistracy of the prætor, and also of the curule ædiles. The name of prætor, indeed, was of much older standing. It properly means one who goes before, a leader, and was at an earlier period assigned to the first magistrate of the commonwealth, as the leader and captain of her forces. The consul is said to have been originally designated prætor. But on the revival, if such it was, of the title it was assigned to the magistrate who should occupy the highest place within the city, while both the consuls were now for the most part engaged in the conduct of wars abroad. He was to declare the law and preside at the tribunals. In token of his high dignity he was to be attended,

like the consuls, by lictors, but, as inferior to the consuls, the number of these attendants allowed him was not twelve but six only. The prætor as now appointed, was to be always a patrician; and it would seem that the new institution was meant to be in some degree a compensation to his order for the surrender of one of the consulships. At a later period this magistracy was doubled; the prætor urbanus being appointed to administer the law as between citizen and citizen, his colleague, the prætor peregrinus, undertaking the more difficult task of adjusting the litigation of the non-Roman population, either among themselves or with the citizens in the

U.C. 388. midst of whom they resided. The first prætor was a
B.C. 366. Spurius Camillus, and the name seems to imply the amal-

gamation which was now taking place between the patricians and the plebeians, for while Camillus himself, the hero of the Furian house, was a genuine patrician, he was represented as the author of the reconciliation of the two orders, while the prænomen of Spurius seems to be always assigned by history or legend to a champion of the plebeians. Such were Spurius Cassius, Spurius Mælius, and Spurius Metilius, all alike noble sufferers in the cause of plebeian independence, and such, we may imagine, under happier circumstances, was the first of the Roman prætors, Spurius Camillus. The meaning of the word *Spurius* is itself doubtful. At a later period it commonly designated one who is baseborn or illegitimate, and in this sense it may, no doubt, have been from the first applied by patrician annalists to the false aristocrats who betrayed the interests of their own party; but if, on the other hand, we assume its derivation from *super*, implying true greatness and superior nobility, we may ascribe this curious recurrence of the name to the invention of the plebeians themselves, to signalise the greatness of the champions who came over to them from the ranks of their opponents. As this is also the prænomen of Servilius Ahala, one of the most noted leaders of the patrician faction itself, we may the more readily infer that the name was given indifferently by either party as a token, not of contempt, but of admiration. If such be its origin, we may be disposed to admit that Spurius is actually the proudest of all the Roman personal appellatives.

The creation of the curule ædiles was another sop to the patricians. The ædiles, to whom the care of the public buildings was assigned,

U.C. 388. had hitherto been two in number, and both plebeians, in-
B.C. 366. vested with the same personal inviolability as the tribunes.

The number of these officers was now increased to four, two of

whom were to be henceforth patricians always, and to enjoy the patrician privileges of the curule chair in the Senate, the wearing of the prætexta, and the display in their halls of the images of their illustrious ancestors. When the plebeian ædiles chose to stand on their ancient traditions and refused to preside at the Great Games of the Roman people, these patrician magistrates were thus added to their college, on which occasion a fourth day was also added to the shows, and a fourth tribe created for the plebeians, to rank henceforth beside the Ramnenses, Tatienses, and Luceres. After the first election, indeed, the distinction ceased to be observed, and the ædiles were appointed indiscriminately by both orders, which became in fact from this period rapidly amalgamated. From henceforth we hear no more of secession to the Mons Sacer, or of the creation of a dictator to quell a sedition of the plebeians.

The saviour of the state, the dedicator of the temple of Concord, had now done his work, and it was time he should be removed. The following year witnessed the death of Camillus, the great dictator, the greatest of all the heroes of Roman story till we come to Julius Cæsar. He perished at a very advanced age, but he fell at last a victim to pestilence. The annals of the city note very carefully the recurrence of these periodical visitations, and the plague of the year 365 was the sixth that they commemorated since the date of the Regifugium. Rome, indeed, was then, as now, an unhealthy city ; during the heats of summer and in the noxious vapours of autumn the seeds of disease were always germinating ; but the Romans marked with superstitious anxiety any unusual aggravation of their chronic sufferings, and the occasion of a year of sickness was generally signalled by the dedication of a shrine to Apollo or Febris or Mephitis, or by the institution of some special solemnities. Sometimes the whole consistory of the gods was to be propitiated by a *lectisternium*, when the images were taken from their pedestals, borne in procession through the city, and laid upon couches in the Capitol before tables loaded with sacrificial offerings. The pestilence of the year 365 deserves to be noted for the introduction of stage-plays into Rome. The priests advised that the histrions or players of Etruria should be invited to give their festive entertainments, which bore, indeed, some general analogy to the early drama of the Greeks, but were closely connected, at least in their origin, with the religious ritual of the Etruscans.

The story of this popular propitiation has a fair claim to be deemed historical. Not so, however, another, which is assigned to

a date within a year or, at most, two years of this period, the legend of the devotion of Mettus Curtius, one of the most romantic of its kind. Possibly a flood or a tempest or an earthquake may have caused the formation of a deep pool or rift in the Forum, but in the imagination of the people this opening became a gulf formed by no human power, and which no human power could avail to fill up. The gods required the sacrifice of the best. Gold and jewels and precious things were in vain cast in; at last a noble youth leapt with his horse full armed into the chasm, and the gods were satisfied, for what better offering has a state to give than the life of her noblest and her bravest? It can be shown, indeed, that the story is confused with another, not more genuine, of a much earlier date; but if the fact was false, the idea at least was true, and will never cease to bear real fruit from generation to generation.

CHAPTER XII.

Continued progress of the plebeians towards equality with the patricians—Foreign wars: frequent creation of dictators: wars with the Gauls: exploits of Manlius Torquatus and Valerius Corvus—Commencement of the contest of Rome with Samnium—War with the Latins, and their final association with the Romans, but with generally inferior rights.

ALTHOUGH we gladly assume the era of the Licinian law as a landmark in Roman history, and date from it a marked decline of the ancient rivalry between patrician and plebeian, we are not to suppose that such a revolution was carried out at a single blow. We hear, indeed, little more of the grave discord between the two orders which has seemed so often to imperil the very existence of the commonwealth; but it was not all at once, or without repeated struggles, that the one surrendered all its privileges to the other, and consented to merge the rule of a dominant race in a constitution of rights altogether equal. The compact regarding the consulship was not always loyally observed. More than once it was found impossible to make a regular election, and the government was conducted by interreges until a dictator on the one hand, or the tribunes on the other, could force a candidate upon the comitia.

U.C. 398.

B.C. 356.

The contest was still carried on with alternate success. In the year 356 the plebeian C. Marcius Rutilus actually attained the dictatorship; and having gained a victory over the

Etruscans, enjoyed by the command of the plebs the triumph which had been refused him by the curies. The same Marcius attained five years later to the august magistracy of the censorship, which had been a potent instrument in the hands of the patricians, but became from this period the common apantage of either order. On the other hand, once at least in the years that immediately followed, the plebs felt themselves constrained to threaten a secession, on account of the old grievance of debt and usury; but the sedition seems to have been promptly quelled by the appointment of a popular dictator, Valerius Corvus, B.C. 342.

On the whole, however, there was no period in the Roman annals that seems to have so often demanded the firm hand of an extraordinary magistrate. Between the years 365 and 342 a dictator was created no less than fourteen times; six times for the defence of the city against foreign enemies. Three of these dictators were appointed in the years 360, 359, and 357, to make head against a Gaulish invasion; one repulsed the Hernicans in 361, another the Etruscans in 355, and a third the Auruncans eleven years later, in 344. It will be well to glance at the dealings of Rome with these her enemies nearest home, before we enter upon the wider field of warfare which will soon begin to open upon us.

The Gauls after their first retreat from Rome did not fail to return and harass the republic with repeated incursions. They had, indeed, penetrated far beyond the Roman territory, into Campania, and even Apulia. But these distant forays were but the last feeble pulsations of the great tide of their invasion. They made no settlements, collected no resources, gathered no strength. Their assaults were furious, and might often effect the rout of an unstable opponent; but the constancy of the Romans under good leading seldom failed to baffle and repel them. The anxiety, however, which they caused at Rome long continued unallayed. On the occurrence of an assault from this formidable people, formidable in the eyes of the Romans from their reputed size and strength no less than their numbers and military prowess, it was no longer a 'war' that was declared, demanding the regular forms of conscription, but a 'Gallic tumult,' when every citizen was called to arms, and the whole nation rushed in a mass to the rescue. The courage of the Romans always answered to the emergency, and the bravery of T. Manlius obtained much fame among them. This popular hero engaged in combat with a gigantic Gaul on the bridge of the Anio, slew him and carried off his chain of gold, whence he and his descendants

bore the illustrious name of Torquatus. Yet even courage such as theirs might be heightened by the assurance of supernatural assistance, as when a crow perched itself on the helm of M. Valerius, struck out fiercely with its beak and claws, and baffled with its wings the fence of his adversary. Hence the name of the house of Corvus, and again that of the Corvini, who are associated by Lucan with the Torquati, the Lepidi, and the Metelli, in the solemn dirge he sings over the falling glories of the republic. We shall hear no more of Gaulish incursions; when the Gauls and the Romans meet next it will be in the vain attempt of the Northern barbarians to defend their own conquests within the Apennines from the wave of Southern invasion.

The Gauls had maintained themselves obstinately in the passes of the Alban hills, and from thence had made their advances towards Rome, coming on one occasion to the very foot of the Colline gate, breaking up the confederation of Latin towns which Rome had held in alliance. They were probably supported by those ancient foes of the Republic, the Hernici and the Aurunci, who give name to more than one consular campaign at this period. The people of Privernum are specially mentioned among the assailants of Rome, and over these she gained a triumph. Of the cities of Etruria none were nearer to Rome, and none more inveterately hostile, than Cære and Tarquinii. Again these cities rose against her, and again she defended herself against them with resolution; and though acknowledging at least one severe defeat and bloody massacre of her soldiers, compelled them to secure their own future safety by pledging themselves to a truce, the one of a hundred, the other of forty years. From the recurrence of these obscure contests we seem to learn the continued weakness of the republic, unable as she was in two hundred years to shake off the petty hordes which still infested her borders; and when we consider the martial training and the civil prudence which are so distinctly attributed to her children, we can only suppose that this weakness resulted from the internal dissensions which were so rife within her walls. Even after the passing of the law of Licinius this fatal cause still continued to operate, and Rome was still, it would seem, compelled to maintain her desperate defence with one hand tied behind her.

But while Rome was thus fully occupied in her own territory, or on its immediate borders, her conquering destiny was impelling her to mingle in more distant contests. In the year 343 she found herself solicited by the Campanians to defend

U.C. 411.

B.C. 343.

them against the encroachments of the Samnites. So began the first of the three great wars with Samnium, in the course of which Rome was more than once reduced to extremity, and exposed to the most dire disgrace. The conflict lasted full seventy years, but it was after this long trial of her endurance and the success which crowned it, that she became at last the ruling power in Italy, and was enabled to withstand the invasion of a Pyrrhus and a Hannibal. The first event of this war brought her into contact with the Carthaginians, who sent envoys to congratulate her on her victory at the Mount Gaurus. But this success was speedily chequered by a mutiny among the legions at Capua, when the soldiers marched to Bovillæ, on the road to Rome, and were there met by a sympathising crowd of citizens, and enabled to extort from the government a sweeping measure of relief for debtors, as well as the satisfaction of some military grievances. A more important enactment carried also by the tribune Genucius provided that henceforth both consuls might be taken from the ranks of the plebeians. The Republic seemed at once to require fresh strength, and this reconciliation was followed by at least a temporary compact

U.C. 413.
B.C. 341.

between the Romans and the Samnites. It is clear that at this period the wisest heads among the old aristocracy became fully impressed with the necessity of making ample concessions. In fact, the plebeians by this time had become by increased wealth and influence substantially their equals, and to insist upon the maintenance of political distinctions between them was neither safe nor reasonable. In the year 339 the dictator, Publius Philo, himself a plebeian, effected a final reconciliation between the two orders, which had already coalesced actually into a single body. He gave the last blow to the ancient polity by suppressing the veto of the Senate, and imposing the plebiscita, or ordinances of the tribes, as the common law of the state. In may be said, indeed, that this later enactment was only the republication of one of an earlier date, and that the former was in reality neutralised by the important provision that the comitia of the centuries should make no resolution which the Senate had not previously sanctioned. It must be admitted that some obscurity hangs around the legislation of this period, but the Romans themselves, as we must suppose from the statement of Livy, regarded it as a decisive triumph for the younger over the older aristocracy.

The spirit of concession which presided over the internal controversies of the republic did not extend to her foreign relations.

The quarrel between the patricians and the plebeians, representing, as they nominally did, the conflicting interests of two rival races, was transferred to the citizens of the state, the denizens of Rome and occupiers of the Roman territory, and the people in their immediate neighbourhood, who held the dubious position of half-allies and half-subjects, such as the Latins. The Latin confederacy still subsisted, though in complete dependence upon Rome, and under condition of serving by her side in the wars of the republic. The concessions which had been recently made to the Roman soldiery, the regular force of armed citizens who had marched upon Rome from Capua, had been jealously withheld from their Latin comrades, in the same spirit of exclusion which so long marked the attitude of the patricians towards the plebeians. At this point of our history we seem to enter upon another period of political disunion, pregnant with the gravest consequences. After the contests of many generations it issued in fact in the great Social War which finally extorted from Rome the admission of her Italian allies to the full enjoyment of her franchise, and once more transferred the conflict of parties from Rome and Italy to Italy and the provinces. The same year that witnessed the capitulation of the Senate to the tribes was marked by the revolt of the Latian auxiliaries against the Roman legions. The Latins claimed an equal share in the Roman polity with the Romans by whose side they had fought so long, and with no inferior prowess, against the Etruscans, the Volscians, and latterly the Samnites. They boldly laid claim, not only to a division of the spoil, but to participation in the prerogatives of office. They demanded, so we are assured, that one of the consuls and one-half of the Senate of the united peoples should be Latins. The Romans disdainfully rejected the claim, which seemed to affect not only their dignity but their material interests also. The Latins, not content, as the plebeians of old, with seceding from the alliance, rose in arms against the yoke imposed upon them, and asserted their own sovereign right to an equal share in the fruits of their common inheritance. Their language was the same, the main source of their blood was the same, their traditions were for the most part held in common, and the same Latian Jupiter looked with equal favour upon both from his temple on the Alban Mount. The particulars of the great Latin war, as it is commonly designated, of the years 340–358, are given with much colouring by the Roman historians. Among the most remarkable of its incidents are the battles of Vesuvius and Tifanum, and the

ultimate success of the Romans may perhaps be ascribed to the skill which they had now attained in the conduct of sieges, and the pertinacity of the legionary in remaining through the winter under his standards. The Latins, who had been wont, when defeated in the field, to retire behind the shelter of their rock-built citadels, were thus baffled, and their strongholds one by one reduced. The conquest of Antium, which up to that time had been a naval power, and had harassed what little commerce Rome could boast, furnished a new matter of triumph. The brazen beaks of the enemies' vessels were cut off and affixed to the orators' platform in the Forum, which thence obtained the designation of the rostrum which has become so common and so illustrious. But the sense the Romans entertained of the crisis through which they passed in this desperate conflict is marked apparently by two instances they recorded of military devotion. They vaunted, indeed, ungenerously and no doubt untruly, that the Latins evinced less gallantry than themselves in the field; it would have been better to have contented themselves with pointing to the stories of T. Manlius, the patrician, who smote his son with the lictor's axe for engaging contrary to orders with an enemy whom he overcame; and of Decius Mus, the plebeian consul, who sacrificed himself for his country, plunging alone into the hostile ranks, when assured that by so doing he might avert a great disaster and secure a great triumph for Rome. From age to age the history or the legends of Rome teem with instances of this personal devotion, which, whether fact or fiction, alike attested the quality of Roman patriotism, and alike contributed to form it. No doubt it was well for Rome that a crisis of so much importance to her development should be signalised by stories which could not fail to fix upon it the regards of all her citizens of every order. The issue of the Latin war was shortly this. The confederacy of Latium was entirely broken up. The alliance which had subsisted, nominally at least, between Latium and Rome was converted into the entire dependence of the worsted party. Some of the Latin towns, such as Tibur and Præneste, were allowed to retain their own laws and magistrates; others were occupied by Roman garrisons under the name of colonies; a few were placed as it were in a grade between these, and suffered to enjoy their own lands and usages under the control of a Roman prefect. For the most part the Latin population were admitted to a qualified Roman citizenship; they were declared to be citizens without the right of suffrage; but the rights of commercial exchange and of inter-

marriage were not withheld from them. Such was the origin of the 'Latium,' or 'jus Latii,' or Latin citizenship, which came at a later period to be extended to many other conquered territories, and was the source of bitter heartburnings and fierce dissensions in another generation. It may be assumed, however, that the reception of the Latins into almost the same relation to Rome as the plebeians of an earlier date had occupied in respect to the patricians, served more potently than any formal enactments to appease the hostile spirit of these rival nations, and weld them firmly together for the maintenance of the prerogatives which they now equally asserted against the pretensions of the foreigner and the subject.

CHAPTER XIII.

Alexander, King of Epirus, invades Italy—The Romans unite with him against the Samnites—Continuation of the Samnite war—Pontius makes the Roman army pass under the yoke at Caudium—The Romans retrieve their disgrace, but suffer disaster at Lautulæ in an engagement with the Campanians—The Samnites again defeated: Campania reduced—The Romans equip a naval armament. (B.C. 332–311.)

IN so concise a recital of the leading incidents of Roman history as is here offered it seems necessary to refrain generally from geographical explanations, and leave the reader to follow on his maps the movement of armies and the extension of conquests. It is not less necessary to leave him to trace from other sources, which he can easily discover, the origin and derivation of the various races and communities with which the Romans come successively in contact. To do otherwise would be to expand the history of Rome into a history of Italy, and eventually into a history of the world. It is at the period on which we are now engaged that Rome comes first historically in contact with the Hellenic settlements in Magna Græcia, or Southern Italy; but what was the origin of those settlements, what their progress, and what at this moment their political polity, are matters on which it will be best to refer to the common sources of information, and content ourselves with barely noticing the fact, and following out the events which ensued upon it. The Romans, it is related, were first brought into contact with the Greeks in the following manner.

Alexander, King of Epirus, uncle to Alexander the Great of Macedon, conceived the idea of turning his forces westward at the same time that his nephew was undertaking his famous invasion of Asia. In the year B.C. 332, invited, as he asserted, by the people of Tarentum, he landed an army on the southern coast of Italy near Pæstum, and made an attack upon the Samnites and the Lucanians, who were threatening the Grecian colonies, now in the decline of their power. The Romans had concerted a truce with the Samnites, in order to leave themselves free for their last encounter with the Latins; but that end having been served, they were not unwilling to see a new enemy press upon the rear of a people whom they had themselves found too formidable, and on slight pretences allowed themselves to form an alliance with Alexander. They were, in fact, girding themselves for a desperate struggle with the chief power of Central Italy, and their views of conquest were no doubt enlarging far beyond the range of the Volscian and the Etrurian hills which had hitherto closely confined them. They proceeded, we are told, to form an alliance with the Gauls; with that remnant of them, it may be supposed, which still lingered in the regions south of Latium on the borders of Samnium and Campania. Alexander, indeed, was slain soon afterwards, but the Romans continued to develop their plans without his assistance. To every town on the Liris which the Samnites attacked they hastened to offer protection or revenge. Against those which resisted them they exercised the usual rights of conquest, but to the people of Privernum, struck by the bravery they had displayed, and desirous of securing such gallant allies on friendly terms, they extended the rights of their own city. The limits of the Roman territory were extended to the Volturnus, and the Samnites, in their turn, were reduced to seek alliances among the Grecian cities of Campania, which they had themselves so lately harassed. The peoples of Southern Italy, whether Greeks or natives, seem to have vacillated from side to side with equal levity. They were sensible, no doubt, both of their own weakness and of the danger which threatened them equally on either side. On the one hand the Greek city of Palæopolis ventured to resist the Romans, and was easily overpowered; the Lucanians also joined with the Greeks of Tarentum in turning against Rome, and thus disembarassing the Samnites of the enemy gathering in their rear. But, on the other hand, the Greeks of Naples and the Campanian coast seem to have accepted the alliance or rather the dominion of Rome, and the

U.C. 422.
B.C. 332.

Apulians remained faithful to her, and effected a diversion against the Samnites. These wars are obscure and of little interest; it remains only to note one important result that flowed from the protracted siege which Palæpolis underwent. The Roman consul was detained under its walls beyond the period assigned to his magis-

U.C. 428.

B.C. 326.

tracy. A recent enactment had forbidden any of the superior magistrates being reappointed under an interval of ten years; but the services of Publilius Philo could not be dispensed with, and the law was evaded by nominating him proconsul, and continuing him in his command. Such was the origin of the office which at a later period gave leaders to the Roman armies quartered in distant provinces, or engaged in conquests of many years' duration. It was a necessary development of the military character of the Romans, and corresponded with the permanent retention of the legionaries under their standards; but it outraged the first principle of the free commonwealth, that the power of the magistrates, however great, should be limited to a single year, and it prepared the way for the military autocracies of a Sulla, a Pompeius, and a Cæsar, and finally for providing in the person of the Imperator a master for the consuls and for the republic together.

A contest of several years' duration, conducted sometimes in open combat on the plains, sometimes in the passes of the mountains, sometimes in pitched battles, more often in attacks upon fortified places, and ambuscades and surprises, continued to train the Roman legionary to the skilful use of his weapons and the highest power of endurance. Nor less did it serve as a school of tactics for the leaders in these varied services. The opponents were well matched, and every struggle was decided by sheer conduct and valour. Once more the Romans signalised their own sense of discipline by repeating an ancient story of military vigour. The dictator Papirius would have given up to military execution his brave lieutenant Rullianus, for attacking and defeating, but against his orders, a Samnite force. The culprit fortunately made his escape, and ventured to fling himself into Rome and appeal to the citizens at home from the armies in the field. The tribunes interceded for him; but even the tribunes, it would seem, dared not insist against the arbitrary sentence of the dictator. At the instance of the whole people Papirius at last deigned to yield, and the example of the young Manlius was not repeated. Rome had now outlived the days of her first uncompromising severity.

This occurrence is dated in the year 324, the same in which the

great Alexander of Macedon reposed at Babylon from completing the conquest of the Persian monarchy. The historian Livy U.C. 430.
B.C. 324. undertakes in a marked passage to weigh the chances of success with which this mighty conqueror of the East would have encountered the growing Western republic, had he ventured to lead his veterans across the sea into Italy. The Roman decides in favour of Rome. Modern writers have hesitated to accept his decision, and have rather inclined to pronounce that the Greek would have been victorious. The question is perhaps an idle one, the more so as it does not appear exactly what should be the conditions of the problem. Supposing Alexander to have crossed with his 30,000 Macedonians, and to have encountered the 250,000 Roman conscripts, who would have fought, we may believe, under a Camillus or a Fabius or a Papirius to the last man, he might have won more than a single battle perhaps, but every victory would have been hardly less ruinous to him than a defeat. Man for man the Romans were at least equal to the Macedonians; we have no reason to suppose that their discipline and their methods of warfare were inferior. Alexander bears a mighty name among military captains, but of his capacity in conflict with equal enemies we have little evidence. In a protracted campaign between the Macedonians and the Romans we may fairly presume that the Romans would have been the conquerors. If, again, we are to imagine Alexander throwing himself at the head of his veteran forces into the ranks of the Italian foes of Rome, and marshalling them, as Hannibal did at a later period, against the common enemy, though no doubt his chances of success would have been greatly increased, the failure of Hannibal himself must teach us to doubt his ultimate triumph. We have at least no reason to believe that the Macedonian, whatever were his military talents, possessed the diplomatic skill of the Carthaginian, to enable him to take and keep the lead of a motley confederacy, still less that he had the resolution and pertinacity of character with which Hannibal bore up for so many years under the adverse circumstances that grew around him. Again, we may fairly conclude that Alexander would have failed. The kindred attempt of Pyrrhus, which is soon to be related, is sufficiently in point to confirm us in this conclusion. Surely it was not in the nature of things that the Greek should prevail against the Roman.

..... Meanwhile the great war for the conquest of Central Italy continued. From time to time a truce, a pretended peace, might be concluded between Rome and Samnium, as the result of mutual

exhaustion, but hostilities, if ever fully broken off, were speedily resumed. On one occasion the Samnites being worsted surrendered, in expiation of their last rupture, the body of their leader Papius, who had slain himself to escape captivity. But the Romans scornfully refused to accept it, and the Samnites rushed desperately to arms. The right, it might appear, was now on their side, and the gods seemed to favour them. Their gallant captain, Pontius of Telesia, was enabled to entice the two consuls, with four legions, the great mass of the Roman armies, into a defile at Caudium, and reduce them to the necessity of capitulation. 'Take your revenge,' said the old Herennius to his son, the general of the Samnites, 'and kill them all, but count then upon an interminable war with the Romans, who will never forgive or forget it; send them back free, with their arms and ensigns, and the Romans will make peace, and possibly keep it, with a foe so generous.' Pontius would do neither the one nor the other. He insisted upon humiliating the enemy to the uttermost. He granted his captives their lives, but required them to suffer insult worse than death. He set up two spears erect with a third laid across them, and under this simple yoke, as it was

U.C. 438.
B.C. 321.

called, made the whole Roman army pass, with its two consuls, Postumius and Veturius, four legates, two quæstors, and twelve tribunes of the legions. Six hundred knights were retained as hostages for the peace which the consuls covenanted in the name of the city.

But to this covenant the city itself was no party. So, in the midst of universal dismay and indignation, the Senate and the people declared. The whole people felt the disgrace to be intolerable. The consuls dared not resume the ensigns of their office. Twice was a dictator nominated to meet the crisis, and twice the auguries forbade his creation. The government was at a standstill, till the interrex Valerius Corvus designated for the consulship the two noblest of the citizens, Papirius Cursor and Publilius Philo. The disgraced Postumius was the first to counsel the repudiation of the treaty he had himself made under compulsion; but he added that it was necessary to clear the faith of Rome by delivering to the Samnites the chiefs of the army they had set at liberty. Conducted by the fecials into the camp of Pontius, 'I am now a Roman no longer,' said Postumius, 'but a Samnite like yourself.' Then striking the fecial a blow, he exclaimed, 'See, Romans, I have violated the sacred person of your herald; it is now for you to

revenge him.' So he gave his countrymen a patent cause of war, and the conscience of Rome was easily satisfied.

The consuls resumed the invasion of Samnium with a light heart; the more so, perhaps, inasmuch as the Samnites themselves had seized Fregellæ and slain its defenders in defiance of the terms of their capitulation. At first, indeed, the Samnites gained some further advantages, but the legions penetrated into Apulia, and the same soldiers who had passed under the yoke at Caudium now brought their enemy to a decisive engagement, and gained a triumphant victory. They released the hostages retained by Pontius, together with the arms and trophies surrendered at their late defeat, and had the satisfaction of passing under the yoke, in their turn, the general himself, with 7,000 of his Samnite warriors. The honour of Rome was thus repaired, and her courage and confidence restored, of more value to her in the career of conquest which was opening before her than the substantial fruits of her victory; though the Samnites were reduced to demand a truce for two years, while the Apulians offered her their alliance and surrendered some of their strong places as a material guarantee. Mistress of the principal cities both in Apulia and Lucania, Rome could now shut the South of Italy against the Samnites, whom she already closely pressed in the opposite direction by the strong grasp she had acquired of Latium and Sabellia.

Confined within these strict limits the forces of Samnium again boiled over at the expiration of the covenanted term. The people of Campania and Latium were urgently tempted or goaded into defection. Many places were lost to the Romans, and again recovered. The Latins, indeed, continued unmoved, but the Aurunci plunged too heedlessly into revolt, and were punished so severely that their name ceases from henceforth to appear in history. In Campania the dictator Fabius suffered a notable defeat at the pass of Lautulæ; but the disaster was fully retrieved almost on the spot of the recent disgrace at Caudium, in a battle which cost the Samnites 30,000 lives. The leaders of the revolt of Capua flung themselves on their own swords, so complete was their despair of the cause of Campanian independence. The Samnites were once more confined within the mountain tract of the central Apennines, and cut off from all their alliances on the coast of Italy. The Romans, on the other hand, now first began to look to the sea for instruments of warfare, and equipped themselves a fleet, with two maritime prefects to command it.

U.C. 436.
B.C. 318.

U.C. 440.
B.C. 314.

U.C. 443.
B.C. 311.

CHAPTER XIV.

Continuation of war with the Samnites, the Etruscans, and the Gauls : battle of the Vadimonian lake—Censorship of Appius Claudius Cæcus, and of A. Fabius—The scribe Flavius publishes the forms of legal actions—The Ogulnian law—Defeat of the Gauls in the battle of Sentinum—The Samnite Pontius Telesinus defeated, captured, and put to death—Conclusion of the Samnite war—Second battle of the Vadimonian lake and defeat of the Gauls—Progress of the Romans in the South of Italy. (B.C. 310–282.)

THE struggle between Rome and Samnium had now lasted about thirty years, and we have arrived at the middle period of what is commonly designated the second Samnite war. But at this conjuncture the contest assumed new directions and expanded proportions. The year 311 marks the transfer of military operations from the southern regions of Italy to those which lay north of Rome, from the borders of Campania, Apulia and Lucania to the country of the Etruscans on the right bank of the Tiber, and of the Gauls still hovering on the central ridges of the Apennines. The successes of Rome against the Samnites seem to have alarmed their neighbours in every other quarter; it was felt on all hands that the crisis of the fate of all Italy was impending; the pride of the Etruscans, the remnant of a once powerful and widely dominant nation, was touched to the quick, and the Gauls became aware that unless these new competitors for universal conquest were definitively worsted, their own fields of plunder would be very closely limited. But it would be to little purpose to follow the campaigns which ensued between these exasperated rivals. The Roman annals alone remain to us, and these records, if such we may fairly style them, represent almost every year as marked with a triumph over one of these three nations, and sometimes over all three conjointly. Hitherto the victories of Rome may have gained some of our confidence, inasmuch as it has been allowed that they were chequered at least by grave and even disgraceful reverses; but from this time the current of success is declared to have been unbroken, and we cannot conceive that the enemies of Rome could have sustained so many crushing overthrows through so long a series of years. The names of the Roman heroes are still the same as before. A Fabius, a Papirius, a Valerius, again and again mount the Capitol with the white robe and laurel chaplet; but to these are now added the representatives of other noble houses, the Junii, the Fulvii,

the Curii, the Sempronii. Whose hands, we would fain ask, did actually write the brilliant annals before us? Did the events of Roman history produce these its reputed heroes, or was it themselves and their flatterers that invented the history? The Roman magnates have acquired, it must be confessed, a dubious reputation with our modern critics; it is thought, and not without much appearance of reason, that many of these tales of victories and triumphs are no other than poetic rhapsodies sung at their banquets and echoed in the market-place.

Q. Fabius Maximus is the Roman hero to whom is ascribed the glory of the war with the Etruscans. Cære, and Tarquinii, the nearest of the Tuscan cities, after the reduction of Veii and Falerii, had constantly risen in arms against the republic, and threatened the Janiculum again and again, as in the days of Porsena. But the advance of the Romans now left these places far behind. One of the most notable exploits of Fabius was his passage of the Ciminian forest, a border-tract of deep defiles and thick jungle, which had long constituted a barrier against invasion from the south. Fabius sent spies in disguise to discover the nature of the country, and what was perhaps of more real importance, to secure the alliance of the Umbrians, on the eastern frontier of Etruria, beyond it. He then boldly plunged into the heart of the forest, and surprised and overthrew the main forces of the Etruscans. Scarcely had he completed this signal victory when a message arrived from the terrified Senate forbidding him to hazard so desperate an adventure. The Roman arms were now advanced northward, and Cortona, Perugia, and Arretium come for the first time within the spreading circle of our history, as seeking the alliance of the re-
U.C. 445.
B.C. 309.

public. The battle of the Vadimonian lake afforded another triumph to Fabius, and was recorded among the most illustrious of the Roman victories.

We may return for a moment from this series of military exploits to note the censorship of Appius Claudius in the year 312. This man was a descendant of Appius the decemvir, and bore a similar character for patrician haughtiness and vehemence of temper. After the legal term of his office had expired he unanimously refused to resign its powers. The tribune P. Sempronius denounced the crime before the people, and threatened to lay hands upon him. Six of the tribunes supported him in this summary proceeding, but three were found to take the side of the patrician usurper, and even after his colleague had loyally resigned his post

Appius continued to exercise the censorship a second year and alone. But the gods did not fail to do justice upon him. When he proceeded in his wanton pride to allow the family of the Potitii, who were specially charged with maintaining the rites of Hercules, to delegate their services to the hands of their clients, it was found that their whole gens became suddenly extinct, and Appius himself was struck with blindness. Hence the name of Cæcus by which he was distinguished among the members of his house, unless, as modern scepticism insinuates, the story itself be a fiction accommodated to the name.

The censorship of Q. Fabius, dated 304, is remarkable for incidents of more real importance. It was for the sake of internal concord, as Livy says, but rather with a view to protect the higher classes of the citizens from the increasing multitude of the poorer and more turbulent citizens, that this magistrate effected a change of the constitution, by which the artizans and generally the people of the lowest class, the children for the most part of enfranchised slaves, Romans of only one generation, should be thrown together into four urban tribes, and thus diminish the undue pressure of mere numbers upon the decisions of the people. Such at least is the outline we have received of this measure of reform, which, if it comes at all near the true account of the matter, indicates either greatly increased influence in the upper or unusual moderation and self-control in the lower classes of the commonwealth.

But at the same time that the aristocracy of Rome were recovering, as it would appear, a portion of their former ascendancy in the popular assemblies, they were losing in another quarter a peculiar source of power which they had hitherto enjoyed unquestioned. Cn. Flavius, the clerk of Appius during his censorship, had been elected a curule ædile, to the great vexation of the nobles, whose candidate was rejected in his favour. Flavius himself was elated perhaps at the attainment of so high a dignity by a freedman's son, such as himself. He determined to follow up the blow by a further attack upon aristocratic privilege, and audaciously published on a whitened tablet the forms of procedure according to law, which had been retained by the patricians as a craft and mystery in their own keeping, but which he had himself acquired under the tuition of his master. It became no longer necessary for the plebeian to resort to his noble patron for directions as to the conduct of actions at law. The tribunals were thus thrown really open to all, and tradition gave way to free and recorded

instruction. It is added that Flavius, satisfied with the signal service thus done to the commonalty, counselled them to give way on the points above-mentioned, and prided himself on the erection of a temple of Concord in memory of the reconciliation he had effected between the rival orders of the state, by awarding to each an equal triumph. The law of the tribune Ogulnius, which followed in 300, sanctioned a further innovation in the interest of the commons. In regard to the higher civil magistracies the equality of the two orders had been now fully established, but by this measure the religious offices, still jealously reserved to the nobles, were at last thrown open to all, the power of the auspices, and the control of the ritual of religion, being surrendered to the plebeians and patricians in common.

Such are the dealings with the Roman constitution that stand out prominently and clearly from the civil history of this period. It is vexatious to see that during the years which next follow the same social questions which have so long disturbed the course of our narration still rise again and again to the surface, and it is difficult to believe in an actual solution of the political problems before us, when we find renewed troubles about the burden of debts, reiterated quarrels of class against class, and a fresh secession of the commons to the Janiculum, in the obscure domestic annals of the period. A long interval was still to be filled up with details, more or less exaggerated or fictitious, of the military exploits of the Romans against the Samnites, and we may suspect that these internal quarrels were to some extent invented to supply the blank of the domestic history. Assuredly neither the reputed wars nor the commotions of Rome can even yet command much of our confidence, or the interest which only such confidence may inspire.

The contest between Rome and Samnium was, no doubt, in fact one long war of more than seventy years' duration, broken only by occasional truces and nominal peaces, just sufficient to allow to either party the breathing-time necessary after repeated exhaustion. But the series of combats which has acquired the name of the Second Samnite War is said to terminate with the treaty of the year 302, and the Third recommences in 299. Again the Samnites, the Gauls, and the Etruscans appear as leagued in a coalition against Rome; again the legions are marched to the north, the south, the east, in quest of these ubiquitous enemies; again follows a long series of martial exploits, generally narrated in great detail, with the names of the leaders on both sides, and a statement of the numbers slain.

Few years elapse without the further record of a triumph at Rome over these and other peoples who ventured to throw in their lot with them. Of all these engagements it will suffice to specify one, the battle of Sentinum, on the northern ridge of the Apennines,

U.C. 459.

B.C. 295.

where the Romans gave, almost for the first time, a great overthrow to the Gauls in the open field. In this battle Q. Fabius Maximus was again the leader of the Romans in conjunction with P. Decius Mus, both of them warriors of high renown among their contemporaries; but the glory of the victory was mainly due to Decius, who in the crisis of the struggle, remembering the self-devotion of his father at the battle of Vesuvius and of the triumph he had thereby secured, threw himself generously into the ranks of the enemy, and again retrieved the fortune of the day by his noble sacrifice. Again a plebeian hero saved the state, and was 'accepted by the infernal gods and parent earth in ransom for the lives of the legionaries and the allies and the whole commonalty of Rome.' Once more let criticism, if it will, reject the reality of the double sacrifice; the story itself lives and bore good fruit for many generations. The battle of Sentinum is remarkable at least in sober history as the last for which the Romans claimed a triumph over the Gauls of Italy, though yet another victory over them is recorded twelve years later.

Of the fictitious character of many details throughout this part of our history it has been necessary to speak more than once. It may be well to give one or two illustrations of this defect which now present themselves to our notice. Passing over the picturesque description of the famous battle of Sentinum with which Livy delights our imagination, the circumstance which he mentions of the Gauls using scythed chariots is in itself suspicious. We know from the indisputable authority of Cæsar in his Commentaries that at a much later period some of the northern tribes of Gaul beyond the Alps were wont to employ such machines, and how much the Roman tactics were disarranged by them. The Belgians of the Rhenish provinces and the Belgian Gauls of Britain are the warriors to whom this usage is more particularly ascribed. In the wars of Rome with the Gauls in Italy or in the southern parts of transalpine Gaul no mention of them occurs. It seems but too probable that Livy was thinking only of what he had heard of the wars of Cæsar, and boldly transferred the chariots of the valley of the Somme or the Sambre and the Weald of Kent to the rugged defiles of the Apennines some centuries earlier.

Still graver suspicion of the sources of our narrative is derived from the earliest existing monument of Roman written history, the inscription on the tomb of L. Cornelius Scipio Barbatus, who was consul in the year 298. The Scipios, who were destined to become one of the most illustrious of the great Roman houses, had already sprung into notice, and had given the commonwealth a dictator in the year 306. The scion of this house to whom this tomb was dedicated receives high honours in the pages of Livy as victor in many important engagements against the Samnites and Etruscans. But it is curious that the inscription on the actual marble, which must have been nearly contemporary, records only exploits which are lightly if at all mentioned by the historian, while the deeds he has specially signalised have no place upon it at all.

The Third Samnite War is reputed to close with the peace of the year 290, after a last crushing defeat, when, according to the story, the valiant Pontius Telesinus was led captive to Rome and cruelly put to death, as an atonement for the disgrace he had so long before inflicted upon her legions. Our history returns to an interval of civil dissension in the city, rendered memorable by the enactment of the Hortensian law, which forms a landmark in the progress of the Roman constitution. Q. Hortensius, it seems, was created dictator in 287 to compose the discord of the rival classes, and to bring back the commons from the Janiculum, to which they had once more made secession. The law of Hortensius after all effected no more than had already been decreed by that of the tribune Mænius, namely, that the plebiscita, or enactments of the people in their tribes, should have the force of law without requiring the consent of any superior assembly. Some, indeed, have imagined that the one law referred to the pretended control of the Senate, and the other to that of the curies. But the action of the curies at this period must have been merely nominal. If there be any truth in this story at all, it may be sufficient to suppose that the later law was in fact a more substantial enforcement of previous legislation which the Senate had evaded or suppressed. On the whole we may remark that while the Roman arms at this period generally maintained the aristocratic faction of Etruscan and other cities against the populace, the internal movement within the commonwealth itself was steadily advancing in the contrary direction. The foreign policy of the republic still remained in the hands of the Senate, and found a ready support from the kings and nobles abroad.

Latium and Campania, the country of the Sabines and of the

Samnites, were all now fully subjected to the dominion of Rome. But northward the Etruscans were still hostile, and the Gauls had rapidly recovered their courage after the defeat of Sentinum. To the southward of the Roman frontier the Greek population of the coast, with the Lucanians and the Bruttians, a people formed at the extremity of the peninsula from the conflux of fugitive slaves and bandits, were all constantly on the alert to harass the conquering people, and received aid more or less openly from the still untamed remnant of the conquered Samnites. Tarentum stood at the head of this loose array, which can hardly deserve the name of a coalition, and though it continued constantly to exercise the Roman arms gave them no serious disquietude. On the border of the Apennines the case was different. If Arretium was maintained in its fidelity by the influence of the noble Cilnius, it was subjected to attack from other Etruscan forces, supported by the still restless Gauls. The Senones were the people who had first assailed Clusium and thence advanced against Rome. It was now again the Senones who armed the last of the Gaulish expeditions across the Apennines. A Roman force hastened to the relief of their faithful ally; but the prætor Metellus, seven tribunes, and thirteen thousand legionaries were left upon the field. When the Senate made a formal complaint their envoys were massacred. Thereupon the consul Dolabella advanced with another army secretly through the country of Picenum and took the Senones in the rear. He ravaged their territory, burnt the villages, sold the men as slaves, and gave their women and children to the sword. At the same time the other consul met the Etruscans and their Gaulish allies in front, and effected their entire overthrow at the battle of the Vadimonian lake, the second great engagement U.C. 471. that had recently taken place on that spot. Then at last B.C. 283. the Gauls sought terms of peace, and the resistance of Etruria was in vain maintained for a brief space. The victory of Coruncanius at Vulsinii ended this long and terrible contest.

Meanwhile there had been little slackening of hostilities in the south. The Greek city of Thurium had implored the succour of the republic against the banditti of Lucania. A first expedition made slight progress, but a second, conducted by Fabricius, succeeded in rescuing the threatened city and leaving it in charge of a Roman garrison. This was the first of the wars of Rome that brought a large amount of treasure; it is difficult, indeed, to imagine whence a sum of 4,000 talents could have been amassed

unless the Greek cities were laid under contribution, and Thurium itself made to pay largely for its rescue. But not the public treasury only but the legionaries themselves were severally enriched by the booty of this campaign, and the fatal thirst for plunder generated which soon turned the armies of Rome into an organised instrument of spoliation. The most opulent of the Grecian cities of Lower Italy were now thoroughly alarmed, and Tarentum, the queen of Magna Græcia, the wealthiest, the most luxurious, and unfortunately the least warlike of them all, determined to stand on her defence, or rather to entrust her defence to foreign auxiliaries.

U.C. 472.
B.C. 282.

CHAPTER XV.

The war with Pyrrhus—Successes of the Romans—B.C. 282–271.

THE champion under whose wing the Tarentines placed themselves was Pyrrhus, king of Epirus. His country had been the ally of Macedonia, and he was himself the nephew of Olympia, wife of Philip, and a cousin of Alexander, the conqueror of Greece and Persia. He was nephew also to Alexander the Epirote, whose descent upon Italy thirty years earlier has been already mentioned. After the partition of the conquests of Alexander in the East it had become the fixed idea of the most ambitious among the Grecian chieftains who had obtained no share in the spoil, to reproduce in the West the feats of their great prototype, and to establish over the Hellenic cities of Italy and Sicily, and the powers that bordered upon them, a new military empire not less sovereign and not less flourishing than his. Beyond the Greek cities of Thurium and Tarentum, of Sybaris and Crotona, in Italy, lay the forces of the Romans and the Etruscans; beyond the republics of Himera and Syracuse and Catana in Sicily, lay the mighty dominion of Carthage. Etruria, with its traditionary wealth and art and science, was the Egypt of the West; while Carthage, with its commercial resources, represented the activity and splendour of Tyre. Rome alone, less known and less heeded among the Greeks than either of these, presented a constancy of character and a military prowess such as Alexander himself had nowhere encountered; and whatever might have been the fate of Etruria or Carthage in conflict with the Greeks

or Macedonians, it was soon found that Rome was destined to become, not their subject but their master.

The promises held out to Pyrrhus by the Tarentines were glowing, but proved utterly extravagant. They assured him that if he would undertake the protection of Southern Italy against Rome he would be met by a force of 370,000 allies from among the states she had harassed and controlled. The army he could himself bring across the Adriatic was comparatively small, but with 20,000 veteran infantry, and a due proportion of cavalry, backed by the formidable array of twenty elephants, a general of courage, skill, and resources might expect an easy victory over a foe untrained in the approved system of Grecian tactics. The Macedonian phalanx was the most perfect instrument of warfare the world had yet seen, and the Roman legions had never yet been brought into collision with it.

It was in full assurance perhaps of this foreign protection that the Tarentines dared first to intercept and destroy some vessels belonging to the republic, and when an envoy was sent from Rome to demand reparation, to insult him publicly and allow a wretched buffoon to void ordure upon his garment. Postumius replied to the mockery of the Tarentines by a solemn declaration that their blood should wash out the stain, and returning to the city, he exposed the defiled vestment in the Senate-house. The Fathers, however, refused to be carried away with any sudden impulse. Affairs in the north were still unsettled; this new war must be carried on, not against Tarentum and Magna Græcia, but against a mightier foe behind them. The question of war or negotiation was discussed for some days, and offers of accommodation were still urged. The

U.C. 473. nobles of the doomed city would, as usual, have made
B.C. 281. terms, but the populace resisted, and at last no course remained for Rome but to arm herself for a contest with an unknown

foe and with indefinite resources.

But fortune was favourable to Rome. Pyrrhus, on arriving at Tarentum, assumed at once the mastery over the lazy and dissolute mob who had placed themselves under his protection. The Tarentines were soon weary of his authority, and the allies they heedlessly promised failed to make their appearance. Meanwhile the Romans acted with promptness and boldly challenged him to battle, which he tried to avert by negotiation. His terms were at once rejected; the armies met in open field at Heraclea, on the banks of the Siris, and it was more by the surprise of a charge of elephants than by the vaunted tactics of the phalanx that the Romans were thrown

into disorder. The beaten army lost 15,000 men, but the victors left 13,000 on the field, and the victors could worse bear the lesser loss. 'Such another victory,' said Pyrrhus, 'would be worse than a defeat.' But he might now think himself at least in a better position to offer terms such as the Romans would not reject. He demanded only security for his Italian allies, and consented to return himself across the sea. The proposition was brought by his favourite counsellor, Cineas, whose eloquence, it was said, had gained his master more advantages than his own sword. This eloquence was fortified by presents for the senators and for the wives of the senators. None of them would take of his gold, but many were well-disposed to peace for its own sake. The blind Appius caused himself to be led into the Senate-house to declaim against it. 'Rome,' he declared, 'shall never treat with an enemy in arms.' Cineas himself was struck with the simple grandeur of the Roman people, and avowed that their senators were an assembly of kings. Dismissed without success, his report of what he had seen and heard affected the invader with profound discouragement.

The Romans took a special pride in recounting the incidents of the war with Pyrrhus, in which the valour, the constancy, and above all the magnanimity of their own race were held to have baffled the skill and science and manifold resources of the highest ancient civilization. Much no-doubt they coloured and much they imagined; but the result was that they drew a glowing picture of the national character which has impressed itself upon later generations and thrown a halo round the name of Rome which has never ceased to encircle it. Thus has M. Curius Dentatus become proverbial for austere frugality. When Fabricius went to treat with the invader, and it was sought to terrify him into dishonourable terms, the coolness he displayed in the face of the formidable elephants of Pyrrhus won the admiration of the enemy, and was commemorated to his honour by his countrymen. Nor was Pyrrhus more successful in attempting to bribe him; and so much was he at last impressed by a spirit thus superior both to fear and interest, that he consented at his instance to let his prisoners go free to celebrate the Saturnalia at Rome. This indulgence, said another story, was granted them in return for the generosity of the Senate in disclosing to their enemy the offer made them by his physician of poisoning him. The captives, it was added, went on parole, and such was the true Roman sense of honour that they all kept their word and returned. When a Decius, the descendant of the Decii who had devoted themselves for their

U.C. 474.
B.C. 280.

country, declared that he would himself follow his ancestor's example, Pyrrhus thought to deter him by threatening to put him to death, if taken, as a sorcerer in league with infernal powers. But Decius carried out his purpose notwithstanding; nor was his self-devotion unrewarded. The victory, indeed, remained with Pyrrhus, but again it was a victory not less disastrous than a defeat. The camp of the victor was pillaged during the action by his own allies. The position of the invader became at last untenable. He sought and found a pretext for quitting Italy, leaving only a force in the citadel of Tarentum, and betook himself to Sicily, to assist the Greeks in that island against the Carthaginians.

Between Rome and Carthage there had been treaties of amity and commerce, and now a common interest seemed to invite them to unite against their common assailant. Carthage offered alliance, but Rome stiffly refused. She would carry out her own war by herself alone. While, however, the arms of Pyrrhus were occupied and baffled in Sicily, the legions quickly reduced his allies on the continent. The Lucanians, the Bruttians, the Sallentines, and the Tarentines themselves were forced to make a compact with Rome, and Samnium was once more ravaged, and its wretched people driven into the mountains. Pyrrhus made a last effort to recover his position by offering battle to the Romans. The legionaries had now learnt to turn the elephants against their own masters, and it was by the rout of these treacherous auxiliaries—these bulls of Lucania, as the Romans now termed them in derision—that the last attack of the invader was converted into a veritable defeat. Pyrrhus returned in utter discomfiture to his own country, and soon after perished in an obscure combat with his own countrymen at Argos.

The Roman armies seem still to have found some occupation in the south of Italy for a few years. It was not till the submission of the Greek garrison at Tarentum, with the destruction of its walls and the surrender of its fleet, in the year 272, that the conquest of the southern half of the peninsula could be considered as complete. Nor, indeed, yet actually complete, till in the following year the legion of Campanian auxiliaries, which had revolted from the republic and seized upon Rhegium, was reduced by siege, and its
U.C. 483. surviving remnant led captive to Rome and subjected
B.C. 271. to the punishment of the axe. To the north Vulsinii, already worsted, invoked the protection of Rome against her revolted slaves, and was the last of the Italian cities to surrender to the conquering republic. The Vulsinians, it may be remarked among

other booty delivered up 2,000 statues. Such was the commencement of the long career of the Romans in the plunder of works of art and monuments of foreign civilization.

CHAPTER XVI.

Number of the Roman citizens at this period—The twenty-one original tribes supplemented by twelve additional tribes—Distinction between the *Civitas optima jure*, the Latin right, and the Italic—Establishment of the Roman colonies—Construction of roads.

AS WITH the products of Nature, so with the institutions of human society: their vigour and vitality are commonly found to be measured by the time they have taken to grow and ripen. The Greeks under Alexander effected in ten years the conquest of the East; it took the Romans a hundred and twenty years to complete the subjugation of Italy. But the triumph of the Greeks was barren of results; throughout the greater part of the vast regions they overran their power and even their name was rapidly swept away, and where the Grecian dynasties continued to occupy the throne, and their language and literature to prevail, their influence was for the most part confined within a narrow circle. They never succeeded in Hellenizing the native population of Egypt or of Syria. Far different was the result of the Roman conquest of Italy, the germ from which far wider conquests were developed. Rome rendered Italy thoroughly Roman in arts and language and also in political usage, and the effects of her conquest remain there even to this day. And as in Italy so in the far distant provinces she acquired later. Throughout all of them she laid deep the foundations of her national system, and moulded the progress of their history to all after-time. We proceed to take a survey of institutions thus painfully matured and fitted for such marvellous extension and permanence.

In the beginning, as we have seen, the patricians had been the citizens, the plebeians the subjects of the state. This distinction had in process of time, and through the many struggles which have been recorded, become nearly obliterated, and the conflict of class against class within the limits of the city had been transferred to other conditions. But the Romans and the Italians were now respectively taking the place of the rival orders of primitive Rome, and were destined to run a similar course of long hostility and

timely assimilation. The Romans themselves had now become more or less conscious of the principle by which their early revolutions had been governed; and they seem to have contemplated from an early date the gradual progress of the conquered Italians towards the common goal of civic equality. They decreed that the sovereign people should be always the people of the Forum, and that its civil rights should only be exercised within the sacred precincts of the city itself, and with this purpose they jealously maintained the religious character of the limits within which the auspices might be taken, and other ceremonies performed which they declared to be necessary for the legitimate performance of the highest acts of citizenship, such as popular deliberation and election. They provided, however, for the admission of their subjects, one by one, within these limits, as a long probation of service and dependence should seem gradually to qualify them for political enfranchisement. Such admission, however guarded, might wound the pride and affect the immediate interests of a race of conquerors rapidly enriching themselves with plunder; but the spirit even of ambition and cupidity required fresh recruits to maintain it, and as the empire was extended greater numbers were needed to preserve it. Between the years

v.c. 370-
490.

384-264 B.C. twelve new tribes were created to absorb the numbers of foreigners thus admitted to the rights of citizenship, and the *Ager Romanus*, the actual territory of Rome, was extended from the Ciminian forest, in the centre of Etruria, to the middle of Campania. The number of the citizens capable of bearing arms was ascertained every fifth year by the censors, and the result of many of these enumerations is recorded. But the figures, at least in the earlier period, seem often unworthy of credit. If we go back no further than to the year B.C. 293 we find the number there stated at 262,322, from which date it increases slowly to B.C. 252, when it has reached 297,797. From that time it generally declines, and this total is not again exceeded for nearly a hundred years. It is sufficient, however, to remark for the period upon which we have been lately engaged that the armed force of the republic consisted of about 280,000 citizens, representing perhaps a gross Roman population of 1,200,000 souls. This was the central garrison of Italy; but the military force which the republic could set in action was of course vastly larger, the chief condition of alliance with Rome being that of auxiliary service.

If we may speak of an original Roman people—such, for instance, as those who formed the body of the citizens under Servius

—and contrast the aggregate of its own descendants with that of its clients and subjects, we may believe that at this time it did not exceed one-half of the united numbers. But the original twenty-one tribes gave to this section just so many suffrages in the general assembly, while the new recruits, fully equal to it in bulk, were enrolled in twelve additional tribes only, and exercised no more than twelve votes accordingly. Such were the tribes of the Etruscans, the Latins, the Æquians, the Volscians, and other neighbouring races. Somewhat later, that is, in the year B.C. 241, two more tribes were appropriated to the Sabines. But all these people together formed but a feeble minority of the whole people as represented in the assembly of the tribes, while their distance from the city, trifling as it was, sufficed to place them at a still further disadvantage. It was not the policy of the Romans to let them act by deputies. The representative system, as practised by the moderns, was unknown at Rome, because in fact it was alien to the traditions and adverse to the interest of the ruling race.

Accordingly, the course of the Roman policy was but little affected by the views of the citizens at however small a distance from the Forum and the Campus. Nor, though actually quartered in the immediate vicinity of the capital, did these adopted tribes occupy the whole of the district surrounding it. The *Ager Romanus* was intersected, almost within sight from the gates, by parcels of land which still remained in the hands of aliens, and bore the appellation of *Ager Peregrinus*. Several cities of Latium, such as Tibur and Præneste, were still designated as Latin instead of Roman, retained their own municipal institutions, and were attached to the republic, not by the possession of the Roman franchise, but by the condition of a specific eligibility for it. The citizen of a town which had *Latium* or the so-called Latin franchise, became qualified, on serving certain magistracies in his own state, for the enjoyment of citizenship at Rome; and the continual accession of individuals from this source helped to replenish with men of character and position the void caused by constant warfare in the ranks of the Roman nobility. The drain of baser blood was from time to time restored by the introduction into the state of corporate communities.

The franchise, or rights of the city, the object of the dearest vows of the subjects of Rome, thus obtained, comprehended: 1. The absolute authority of the master of the house over his wife and children, slaves and chattels; 2. A guarantee for his personal

liberty, exemption from stripes, and from capital punishment, except by the vote of the people in the city, or under military authority in the camp; 3. The suffrage or vote in the assembly of the tribes; 4. Access to civil honours and employments; 5. The possession of quiritary property, such land or goods as might be held under Roman law; 6. Immunity from all the taxes and tributes imposed at discretion on the subjects of the state. Such was the complete franchise at Rome; the *Jus civitatis optimo jure*. To the Italians beyond the pale of the thirty-five tribes some portion of these privileges might be accorded in various measure and degree. To some the Senate extended the right of dealing (*commercium*); to others that of marriage (*connubium*). The cities of the conquered nations were arranged in different classes, according to the favour in which they were severally held: 1. The *municipia optimo jure*, or of the first class, the inhabitants of which, whenever they visited Rome, were allowed to exercise on the spot the rights of complete citizenship; 2. The *municipia* without franchise, which enjoyed indeed the title, and bore the burdens of citizenship, such as the service in the legions, but were debarred from the suffrage and from the civil offices of the commonwealth; 3. The cities which had renounced their ancient usages to embrace the laws and institutions of Rome, but yet were not entitled to the name of Roman. But below the *municipia* was yet another class of *præfecturæ*, towns subjected to the government of a Roman officer or prefect, under the forms of Roman jurisprudence. These prefectures were generally towns so classed by way of punishment or precaution. Such was the state to which Capua was reduced after a revolt in which she imprudently engaged. To which among these various classes a foreign state brought under the Roman domination should be assigned was generally settled according to the terms of capitulation in each case. There was still a lower rank in the descending scale, that of the *dediticii*, or people who had been reduced by the fortune of war to unconditional submission. These were required to deliver up their arms together with hostages, to raze their walls or receive a garrison within them, to pay a tribute, and to furnish besides a contingent to the armies of the republic.

The *Socii*, or allies, of the Roman state, formed another class of communities differing in some particulars from all those above-mentioned. They were the dependents of Rome, but flattered themselves that they were not her subjects. The Senate indulged them in an illusion which soothed their pride, and rendered them

more serviceable as auxiliaries than they would have been as restless and indignant bondservants. Tarentum was allowed to retain the name of a free state, though here the conquerors, justly suspecting her temper and jealous of her unrivalled position for communication with Greece, went so far as to level her walls and plant a garrison in her citadel. Neapolis was free, but was required to furnish vessels for the Roman marine, and contribute to the pay of the men impressed into it. The Camertines and the Heracleotes were accepted as equals of Rome, on terms of mutual alliance. Tibur and Præneste, in Latium, and most of the Etruscan cities, ranked in the same class; but among these the Romans carried out their favourite system of fostering an aristocratic party, which they attached to themselves, in order to mould through its influence the conduct of the state, and secure, if occasion required, a pretence for interfering with its domestic affairs.

Such was the policy followed by the Senate, as the director of the military measures of the republic, in its relations with the enemies it had conquered. It is characterised by a studied variety of treatment. No attempt was made to mould the mass of subjects into one homogeneous empire. On the contrary, the maxim of Rome was to govern by dividing, to maintain and even intensify the actual diversities of national usage, character, and circumstances. With this view every possible hindrance, amounting often to specific prohibition, was laid in the way of common action among the members of the great confederacy. In matters of commercial dealing, and even of intermarriage, each state is encouraged to maintain itself as a separate unit, and Rome stands apart from all, or makes with each a separate and special treaty. Gradually, however, as the power of Rome extended, and the weight of her central power became more effective, her jealousy relaxed, and these distinctions, long maintained, were suffered to disappear, or were merged in more general conditions. Such were the three Rights under one or other of which the cities of the peninsula came at last to be all comprehended. The first was the *Jus civitatis*, or Right of Citizenship¹, which conferred a share in the central sovereignty of Rome; the second the *Jus Latii*, or Right of the Latin Franchise, which gave to the chief citizens of a state endowed with it access and eligibility to the Roman; the third, the *Jus Italicum*, the Right of the Italic Franchise, the burdens of which were greater, the privileges and prospects of advancement more closely limited. Of this last Right, indeed, we cannot speak with any precision. It may be

doubted whether, at the epoch now under review, it was strictly defined at all; and when it comes more clearly before us at a later period, it may still be questioned whether it applies to corporate bodies, or to their individual members, whether it is in fact a local or only a personal distinction.

Rome, as the ruler of Italy, had not sufficient numerical force to encounter alone the enemies who were constantly harassing or threatening her. Her martial policy required the aid of subsidiary battalions, but these she checked and controlled by a system of her own invention. The Roman Colony was a special institution, to which perhaps there has been nothing strictly analogous in the history of any other state. We commonly give, indeed, this name to the swarms of overflowing population which the states of Greece from time to time sent forth from the parent city, as a complete representation, on a small scale, of the social and religious body from which they emanated, but bound to it in the land of their adoption by no political tie. The so-called colonies of the modern states of Europe have borne even less connexion with their parents than this, and have been generally merely casual combinations of restless individuals fleeing from inconveniences felt or imagined in the old country to the expected abundance of new untrodden regions, and bartering perhaps their commercial freedom for the military protection of the parent state. But the Romans planted their colonies with a settled purpose, and that purpose was the acquisition of political strength. With that view they selected the most appropriate sites in a newly-conquered territory, some city strong in its position or its defences, or important from its geographical relations; they expelled from it the whole or a portion of its inhabitants, and replaced them with a band of Roman citizens, armed and equipped for military possession, to be encamped as it were in a fixed military station. They assigned to these colonists a sufficient portion of the conquered lands, allowed or required them to transplant them with their wives and children, their slaves and dependents, and to establish a local government after the Roman model, with all the social and religious appliances of the metropolis. Thus transferred to a distant locality, the colonist did not cease to be still a Roman; he did not forfeit his franchise with the right of suffrage of commerce and of marriage; but the first he could seldom exercise, the others perhaps not at all. Yet, in view of the enjoyment of these fancied privileges, he bound himself to partake in the defence of Rome and of her interests, and to regard himself as her soldier placed in garri-

son on her frontier. Each colony became a lesser Rome militant in foreign lands. It had its complete organisation after the pattern of the city, its two ruling magistrates, who acted as its consuls with the name of duumvirs, its decurions who constituted its Senate, and other corresponding officers. It had its own military chest and its own force of armed citizens. The numbers drafted into these provincial Romes varied to the greatest extent. Beneventum, the point where the roads into Campania and Apulia diverged, received, it is said, a colony of 6,000. Luceria, which occupied the spot where met the territories of Apulia, Lucania, and Samnium, was occupied by 14,000. We read, indeed, of a colony of as many as 20,000. The number of colonies thus planted throughout Italy during a period of seventy years was not less than twenty. During that period, it will be remembered, the Roman population was drained by a series of most bloody wars. The total number of citizens at the end of the war of Pyrrhus hardly reached 290,000, and it is difficult to believe in an enumeration which would leave hardly one-half of this aggregate for the residents at Rome itself and in the districts immediately surrounding it. We must suppose at least that the colonies did not, for the most part, tax her resources in proportion to the great strongholds above-mentioned.

A glance, however, at the places in which Rome thus fortified herself against the foes on her frontier will show how important was the part they played in maintaining the obedience of Italy, and in leavening her population with the ideas and usages, and even the blood of the conquering race. In the North the colonies of Sutrium and Nepe guarded the passes of the Ciminian forest, and kept the Etruscans in subjection. The Rutulians, the nearest neighbours, and among the earliest opponents of Rome, were controlled by Ardea and Satricum. In the country of the Volscians were planted Antium on the coast, Norba, Velitræ, and Setia among the hills; to which may be added Fregellæ, Sora, and Interamna. Campania received colonies at Cales, Suessa, Aurunca, and Sinuessa. Atina, Aquinum, and Casinum were posted in the mountains. To these might be added other central stations, Æsula and Carseoli, among the Æquians, and Narnia, which covered the route from Umbria towards Rome, and had often admitted the descent of the Gauls from beyond the Apennines. At a still further distance lay Adria, Firmum, and Castrum, in the Picentine territory; Sena and Ariminum, on the coast of the Upper Sea; Brundisium, the port of traject from Bruttium to Epirus; while Tarentum, Locri, and Rhegium were held as mili-

tary stations by the soldiers of the republic. These and other well-guarded fortresses covered Rome with a double or triple line of defences, and supplied her with outposts for the base of her offensive operations in every quarter.

To bind these outposts together and connect them with Rome as their common base, a system of roads was devised which forms one of the most characteristic features of the Roman policy. It was in the midst of the great struggle with Samnium that Appius the Censor constructed the way called after his name which formed a causeway direct from the gates of the city to Capua. This road was actually built with large square stones laid upon a raised platform of sand and mortar, and trenched on both sides. Upon such a pavement the legions could march with all their baggage and implements of warfare with equal speed and certainty in all weathers and at all seasons. The roads themselves were almost indestructible. Some remains of the Way of Appius, not the substruction only, but portions of the outer stonework, are still subsisting at certain points at the present day. This was the first work of its kind, but was the precursor of many thousands of miles of similar roadway with which the great Roman empire became eventually penetrated in every direction. At a later period, but rapidly from year to year, the plan of the Censor Appius was carried out on other lines by other projectors, each of whom was proud to give his own name to the work he had executed. Within a space of about fifty years the Valerian Way was laid down to Corfinium, the Aurelian skirted the coast of Etruria, the Flaminian penetrated the Apennines to Ariminum, and the Æmilian continued this line to Placentia. Each of these roads bore the legions by the shortest route from Rome to the various colonies at a distance, but it was the object of their builders to establish direct communication from the centre to the extremities, and the cross-lines that led transversely from one distant outpost to another were fewer in number and less elaborately constructed. Rome continued to the last to be jealous of encouraging any independent combinations among the various communities of her empire.

CHAPTER XVII.

Rome brought face to face with Carthage—The Greek historian, Polybius, and the early Roman annalists—From this period the history of Rome rests upon a generally secure basis.

FOR a space of more than a hundred years the conquest of the Western world was held in debate between the Romans and the Carthaginians. The progress of Carthage towards universal dominion in the West had hitherto met with few and brief checks, and might well be regarded as irresistible. The fate of many generations of the human race in the seats of its highest moral advance and material culture depended upon the result of the struggle that was about to commence, which forms on this account, as well as from many of the details of its progress, one of the most interesting portions of human history.

We are in a position to appreciate the consequences for good and for evil of the success of Rome over her rival, while we can hardly conjecture the effects which would have followed had the event been contrary. It is idle to compare the wars of Carthage against Rome with those of Persia under Xerxes against Greece, or of the Saracens, at a much later period, against the feeble remnant of the Romanized Moors. It is idle to characterise the Punic wars as a struggle of the Semitic peoples against the Caucasians. We will indulge in no such wide speculations as these. Carthage, as is well known, was an offshoot from Tyre, the great commercial emporium of the Eastern world, and was founded by Phœnician colonists, imbued no doubt with the political and religious sentiments of the Syrian race from which they sprung. But this filiation dated from a remote antiquity. Though the story of Dido, endeared to us by Virgil, is an anachronism of some hundreds of years, there is no doubt that the foundation of Carthage was as early as that of Rome, and the connexion between her and the parent state, never very intimate, had long ceased to have any political significance whatever. It was said, indeed, that when Xerxes enrolled the navies of Tyre in his expedition against Greece he had required or solicited the aid of Carthage as a Tyrian offshoot; but the Carthaginians had made light of the summons, and easily evaded the obligation he would have imposed upon them. Carthage, moreover, was but one, and the youngest, of a number of Tyrian colonies that fringed the long coastline of Northern Africa, none of

which had acknowledged the duty of taking up arms in concert with their almost forgotten metropolis.

Accordingly, Carthage must be regarded as a perfectly independent state, attached by no special sympathies to the East. She had established an empire of her own, and an empire of a peculiar character. Her superior political aptitude had enabled her to subject to her immediate sway a considerable tract of territory to the right and left, and as far as human cultivation could extend at her back; but her chief resources were derived from the indefatigable spirit of commercial adventure with which she had formed relations with every place of trade on almost all the coasts of the Mediterranean. The objects of exchange of the ancient world were far more limited in number than ours, growing as they did almost entirely within the narrow zone of a few degrees of latitude bounded north and south by the opposite coasts of that great inland lake; but within this sphere there was much activity at work. The sea was the free highway of a hundred millions of people who had little interior communication by roads, and who were kept apart from one another by innumerable political restrictions. The Carthaginians made themselves the common carriers of this vast population. It should have been, and for the most part it really was, their policy to keep themselves free from political complications with any other people. With the Greeks, the Phœnicians, the Egyptians, their relations were strictly commercial; with the Romans they made treaties of commerce on the principle of political non-interference; it was not till they were tempted by the wealth and feebleness of the coasts of Sicily that they began to entertain thoughts of establishing a foreign empire.

The Carthaginians had planted their emporia of trade on the coasts of Northern Africa, of Spain, of Sardinia, and Corsica. They traded with the Phocæans of Massilia, and through them with the teeming population of transalpine Gaul. They worked the iron-mines of Ilva, the silver-mines of the Balearic Isles, and the gold-mines of Spain. They traded with the Britons for tin, and with the Frisians and the Cimbri for amber. Wherever they found it necessary to protect their establishments with arms they erected fortresses and planted garrisons. So far they met with little resistance, and the people themselves among whom they settled were easily induced to enlist in their armies for pay. The forces which Carthage could wield consisted of Libyans and Moors from Africa, of Spaniards, of Gauls, of Greeks, and even of Italians.

Trained under her own officers, chosen from the ranks of a proud and wealthy aristocracy, these hired soldiers were formed into hardy and disciplined warriors, and the ample and unfailing stipends they received kept them faithful to their chiefs and their standards. Their comfort was consulted by the politic measure of enlisting the men together with their wives and families, by which the mercenaries were attached permanently to the service for which they had once contracted, and, when sent on foreign adventure, left always hostages behind them. The stern constitution of the Carthaginian polity was itself an element of strength. The traditions of the state suffered little innovation. An ancient oligarchy bore sway, and the foundations on which it was fixed had proved for ages immovable.

The attempt of the Carthaginians to possess themselves of the Greek colonies on the coast of Sicily was the first false step which led eventually to their ruin. Already Rome and Carthage had long watched each other with jealousy. Each perhaps was afraid to make a stroke which might draw down upon it the resentment of the other. The attack of Pyrrhus upon the Romans seemed to offer their rivals a favourable opportunity. But when the Carthaginians moved against Sicily, Pyrrhus was well content to evacuate the continent and fling himself into the island as the protector of the Sicilians against them. They succeeded, indeed, in baffling him, and after passing backwards and forwards between the two scenes of warfare, he had finally withdrawn from the defence of the Grecian communities against either the one enemy or the other. But Carthage had given proof of her ambition, and Rome was on the alert to arrest her schemes, and present herself as the defender of the victims she had prematurely menaced.

Before entering upon the particulars of the great struggle between Rome and Carthage which now opens to view, it may be well to remind the reader that from this epoch we obtain for the first time the guidance of an historian of good faith, with sufficient means of verifying the events which he undertakes to relate. Polybius, our chief authority for the main incidents of the Punic wars, was born within fifty years of their commencement, and had from his position opportunity of communicating with many of the chief actors in them. He was moreover an educated Greek writer, familiar with the requirements of historical writing, and accustomed to seek and sift the evidence upon which he founded his narrative. Whatever may be his defects of insight into the spirit of the

times and of the characters he delineates, he was at least truthful and impartial, and what he tells us of his own knowledge we may confidently accept as fact.

The first writers of early Roman history in a connected form had been Greeks, such as Diocles of Peparethus, Timæus, and Hieronymus. Aristotle had already obtained a glimpse of the rising republic, and had signalised the taking of Rome by the Gauls—an event, it would seem, of sufficient importance to interest his countrymen even at that remote period. It was not, however, till the Romans entered into relations with Alexander of Epirus and with Pyrrhus that their existence became a matter of practical concern to the civilised people beyond the Adriatic. The first Greek writers on the subject of this Italian city would naturally resort to the colonies of Magna Græcia for such information about their neighbour as they could themselves furnish, and this information would be derived in the first instance from the floating traditions which, during the preceding century, had reached Neapolis or Tarentum, conveyed by word of mouth rather than ascertained from such scanty documents as might exist in Rome itself. Hence, no doubt, these original historians gave the prominence we have already observed to the legends which connected Rome with Greece, to the stories of Evander and Æneas, and of recourse to the Delphic oracle and the records of Athenian legislation, which thus obtained a credit not their due with succeeding inquirers. It is probable that the writings of these foreigners first aroused the emulation of the Roman annalists, such as Fabius Pictor and Cincius Alimentus, who began in the sixth century of the city to construct, but also in the Greek tongue, a history of Rome. We have no reason to suppose that historical composition was of native growth in Rome any more than among other Western nations, all of which, including the highly cultured Etruscans themselves, seem to have been wholly strangers to it. But the Romans, when with their imitative genius they applied themselves to the art, had access to other sources than the Greeks before them, and could combine the traditions and fabrications of their ill-informed predecessors with at least the meagre chronicles and fragmentary records existing among themselves. We know, for instance, that from very early antiquity the priests at Rome had compiled a register of the events in which they were officially interested, such as the occurrence of omens and natural phenomena, to which they attached a religious significance; that there were also certain *Fasti*, or lists of magistrates,

dating from a primitive epoch ; and we may suppose that here and there at least a political incident was noted in one or other of these current journals. It is certain, moreover, that the Romans, with their intense family feeling, kept some private memorials of their personal ancestors, and refreshed their remembrance of them from time to time by domestic ceremonies and funeral laudations. The highly romantic character of so much of their early history may lead us also to conjecture that many popular traditions were actually preserved in the form of poetry, though of this we have no positive testimony whatever. The notion, indeed, so suddenly enunciated by Niebuhr and so hastily adopted by his school of critics, that these early accounts are mainly founded on a lost series of ballads and epic poems, may be regarded as already exploded. Many of them, no doubt, are genuine facts exaggerated or invested some with a plebeian some with a patrician colouring ; but many, it may be presumed, are legends invented to account for legal and constitutional traditions. Thus much, however, is certain, that as far as the memory of past events was entrusted to preservation by mere oral repetition, such preservation was in the utmost degree precarious ; while the scanty monuments of written history were subjected to the sweeping devastation of the Gallic conflagration. The Romans, indeed, pretended, as we have seen, that the Capitol at least had escaped the capture of the city ; but no reliance can be placed on their account of the retreat and discomfiture of the Gauls ; and there is good reason to suppose that their city, fortress and all, actually fell into the hands of the invaders. Accordingly very few of their records can be supposed to have escaped ; it may be doubted whether the two or three documents of a previous period, which either Polybius or Pliny believed they had actually seen to their own time, were genuine relics of the age to which they were reputed to belong. That from this period there commenced a systematic fabrication of records pretending to an anterior date may easily be believed ; and it is from such fabrications, grounded more or less upon current traditions, that the first annalists of Rome, both Greek and Roman, drew, we may suppose, a great part of their materials. We see, then, that down to the period of the Gallic war there is no firm ground for the historian of Rome. But in the sources of history posterior to the burning a great change becomes apparent. Whatever may have been the value of contemporary records, however much they were embellished and even falsified by family or national pride, we may be sure at least

that such once actually existed, and that they continued no doubt to exist and be accessible for centuries. The first annalists, we may be sure, had some materials for history, were they but endowed with discretion to use them rightly. It is not to be expected, indeed, that in a rude uncritical age such precious materials would be rightly handled; and still to the time at least of Pyrrhus, and perhaps for one generation later, many evident falsifications of history are apparent. But from the commencement of the sixth century (B.C. 254) we may presume that the memory of events was sufficiently recent to secure the first writers of Roman history from material error. We may proceed, therefore, from this point, without misgiving, to follow generally the lines they have traced for us.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Commencement of the First Punic war—The Romans land in Sicily and obtain great successes—The Carthaginians retain command of the sea—The first fleet of the Romans; the sea-fight and victory of Duilius—Regulus leads an expedition into Africa—Carthage is saved by the aid of the Spartan Xanthippus—Story of the death of Regulus not to be believed—Great efforts and alternate successes on both sides—The Carthaginians sue for peace and relinquish their hold of Sicily—(B. C. 264–241).

FAME reports of Pyrrhus that on quitting the shores of Sicily to make his last attack upon Italy he exclaimed to those about him, 'What an arena do we leave for the Carthaginians and the Romans to contend on!' Two powers now remained to struggle for the dominion of the trilateral island, and within the island itself there lay two other powers which, unable to maintain and defend themselves, had to choose which of these they should accept for their ruler. Of the original Sicilians, who lay, indeed, in the lowest stratum beneath the feet of so many races of conquerors, no account need be taken. But for several centuries the power of the Greeks had been predominant in the island, and though much curtailed of its early grandeur, was still paramount in the principal cities and maritime stations on all the three coasts. Messana, Syracuse, Catana, Egesta, Panormus, and Lilybæum were among the most flourishing of the many Grecian colonies dwelling together each with an independent sovereignty of its own, but bound like the states of the parent country in a loose federation, which if it gave

them some security against intestine commotions, afforded slender means of combined resistance or aggression. The Greek power in Sicily was so far effete, that while its abounding riches and luxury presented many objects of cupidity to the stranger, it possessed no nerve for self-defence. The Carthaginians, as we have seen, had been long assailing and undermining it by intrigue even more than by force. The assistance it had invoked from Pyrrhus had had the effect of bringing the Romans into the field, and placed it, as it were, between two fires.

But besides the Greeks there were Italians in Sicily. Bands of adventurers, detached from the great armies of mercenaries which had been so constantly engaged in the wars of the peninsula, had thrust themselves into the strong places on the coast of the island, and threatened to expel or trample upon their former possessors. So it was that a troop of Mamertines, from Mamertum in the country of the Bruttii, had seized upon the citadel of Messina, the most important place in all Sicily, as the port of passage from Calabria. The Romans had recently overcome and destroyed just such a band of adventurers, who had occupied Rhegium on the opposite shore; they were now invited by the Mamertines to take the contrary part and support these brigands in their lawless occupation of Messina. These adventurers sent envoys to Rome to make the offer of their allegiance and place their city under Roman protection. They laid stress upon their common blood as Italians, and their common interests as continentals. But the Senate could not consent at once to a policy so flagrantly inconsistent. The question was transferred to the assembly of the people; no tribune intervened, and the voice of the people, unless overruled by the veto of the tribunes, was all-powerful. The tribes declared in favour of their new clients, and the Senate was constrained, perhaps not unwillingly, to submit. Rome was well aware that Messina was the most convenient point on the island for landing her forces from the continent, and for harassing and eventually occupying the whole of Sicily. It was the key of the position she coveted. The Consuls Appius Claudius Caudex, and M. Fulvius Flaccus were eager promoters of the undertaking, and it was decreed that a military force should be promptly sent across the straits to the assistance of the Mamertines, who were threatened at the moment by Hiero, king of Syracuse, and little reassured by the treacherous overtures of Carthage to secure them against him.

One of the tribunes, C. Claudius, crossed over without difficulty

in a small boat, and probably by night, and conveyed the assurance of assistance to follow. But the fleets of Syracuse or Carthage blocked the passage against larger expeditions, and the Romans seem to have relinquished their recent efforts to form a marine, and had no means of transporting a force in opposition to them. They collected a few vessels from their Greek subjects in the South of Italy, but their first attempts were still baffled, not without loss; and when Hanno, the leader of the Carthaginians, sent back his prisoners and deigned to remonstrate with the Romans, but was answered with a bolder defiance than ever, he indignantly declared that he would 'no longer suffer them to meddle with the sea even so much as to wash their hands in it.' The treachery of some of the Mamertines had delivered the citadel into his power, and, flushed with success, he condescended to come down from his post there to arrange terms of treaty with the tribune. In the midst of the conference Claudius audaciously seized on his person, and he engaged to surrender the citadel as the price of his release. A band of Romans was admitted, and from that moment Messina passed under the dominion of Rome. The Carthaginians, indignant with their general, condemned him to the death upon the cross, and together with Hiero laid siege to the place. They made a general massacre of all the Italian mercenaries they had received into their forces, lest they should be again betrayed by them, but they failed in preventing the Romans from crossing in sufficient numbers to maintain their occupation of the town, and to secure themselves a port into which to pour their legions whenever occasion should arise. From henceforth the constancy of the republic, backed by no more than the ordinary fortune of war, could not fail to make her eventually mistress of the whole island.

The allied armies of the besiegers were beaten in two successive engagements. Hiero was driven back to Syracuse, the Carthaginians sought retreat on the shores of Africa. The consuls with 35,000 soldiers remained through the following year in Sicily, where they seem to have acquired the possession of sixty-seven cities. Hiero was dismayed at their overwhelming success, and hastened to restore his prisoners, offering tribute and alliance. He thus secured to his fortunate district a long period of peace, which was signalled by the pleasant verses of his court-poet Theocritas. But, leaving this happy corner of the island to enjoy the tranquillity thus easily purchased, the Romans continued to prosecute war against the power of Carthage. They undertook the siege of Agrigentum a

place of importance, and during the period of its protracted investment their armies owed their subsistence to the loyalty of the ruler of Syracuse. The Carthaginians became distressed for money, and found difficulty in retaining the services of their mercenaries, who assailed them with cries for their stipulated pay. On one occasion they actually led a band of 4,000 Gauls into an ambushade prepared at their own instigation by the Romans, and were delighted to be disembarassed of allies whom they dared neither to employ nor to disarm. The Romans remarked proudly that their legionaries also were in arrears of pay, but they fought for their country—not without hopes, it might be added, of plunder—and remained ever constant to their standards. At the end of the third year of the war Rome had left to Carthage no more than a few maritime posts in the island; but, on the other hand, Carthage held full possession of the sea, ravaged some of the coasts of Italy, and threatened all, and was generally able to cut off her rival's forces from their base of operations and supplies.

We are at some loss to understand the statement which has been made upon authority that the Romans, twenty or thirty years before, had applied themselves to the maintenance of a regular fleet of war-vessels, when we are told not only that at this juncture she had no such vessels in her harbours, but was actually wanting in the knowledge of the art of building them. The Greek cities under her sway possessed a small number of trading vessels, but these too, it seems, had no skill in the construction of ships of war. It was not till a fortunate chance threw on the coasts of Latium a Carthaginian quinquereme that the Romans obtained a model upon which to work. Then, indeed, the marvel is altered. In the short space of two months, as we are assured, the vigorous republic had cut down forests, had sawn timbers, had constructed and launched not fewer than a hundred galleys of large size and adequate solidity. Still more, while the ships were building the landsmen of the Italian towns and villages were rapidly enlisted, the lowest classes of the people, the proletarians of Rome, were armed, and their utter inexperience in the art of rowing supplied by exercise with oars upon benches on the dry land. But, as these hasty levies could make little use of naval tactics against the well-trained mariners of Carthage, they were taught not to attempt to outsail the enemy, or to charge him with the beaks of their vessels, but, awaiting his attack, or sidling towards him, to drop solid frames of timber upon his deck, and use them as drawbridges from which to board him. Thus it

was that in the first great engagement of the two rivals at sea the Carthaginians, advancing with full assurance of success, found themselves suddenly baffled and overpowered, and chased to Sardinia, U.C. 494.
B.C. 260. with the loss of half their fleet and many thousands of killed and prisoners. Their leader was attacked on landing by his own mercenaries, and nailed to the cross in satisfaction for their own private injuries.

Such was the victory of Mylæ, the first naval triumph of the Romans, brilliant in itself, and still more important from the encouragement it gave to a people hitherto so inexperienced in maritime wars, and for the presage it afforded of decided superiority in that arm for the future. This presage, indeed, was not fully confirmed, for though the Romans never again feared to encounter the Carthaginians at sea, they were not always victorious, but with many successes suffered perhaps no fewer defeats. The fortunes of naval war remained on the whole pretty equally balanced between them. But in the meanwhile the exultation at Rome was unbounded. She assigned her admiral, Duilius, the honour of a triumph, and erected a column in the Forum to commemorate his singular achievement; it was decreed that he should never go through the city at night without a procession of torch-bearers to illuminate his passage.

So complete, however, was this victory at the moment that the Romans found themselves strong enough to divide their forces; and while one portion was sent on board their vessels to destroy the Carthaginian fleet, and to commence the conquest of Sardinia and Corsica, the other was landed in Sicily to carry on the operations of the war in that island. Surprised by the enemy in a defile, this force was only rescued from a great disaster by the devotion of the tribune Calpurnius, who covered the retreat by the sacrifice of himself and a brave band of three hundred with him. 'With three hundred heroes,' remarked a grave Roman historian, 'Leonidas saved Greece.' The parallel is hardly complete, but it is well to remark an instance of Roman gallantry occurring in genuine history, which may be fairly compared with the legends we so readily reject of an earlier period.

The war continued at various points in Sicily without decided success on either side. The Romans were enabled to relieve Egesta from blockade, and other towns were taken, and again lost. The Carthaginians, expelled for the most part from the parts of the island which lay nearest to the continent, established themselves strongly in Drepanum and Lilybæum at its western extremity, with which they could most easily maintain their communications.

Meanwhile the Romans began to assert the entire command of the sea, and are said to have equipped an enormous force for the bold venture of an attack upon Carthage itself. The expedition, which quitted the shores of Italy under the two consuls Manlius Vulso and Atilius Regulus, numbered 330 vessels, 100,000 sailors, and 40,000 legionaries. This enormous array of men and vessels was encountered off the headland of Ecnomus, not far from Agrigentum, on the southern coast, by a fleet perhaps still larger and more numerous manned from the shores of Africa. It seems hardly credible that the states of antiquity should have arrayed in a single conflict this immense amount of men and material, perhaps five times as great as that which met at Trafalgar. The Carthaginians were worsted, and lost nearly a hundred of their ships. The remainder, however, regained their own shores, and were speedily followed by the victorious armaments of Rome. The invaders, however, did not at once advance to the walls of Carthage, but allowed it time for arming to withstand so unexpected an attack, while they established their camp at Clypea, and devoted some months to reducing the cities on the coast, and securing their means of supply and retreat. The Romans, it seems, were much alarmed at the bare idea of setting foot in a region of many imaginary terrors. Africa had been long to them the land of monsters and of legendary horrors. Not without difficulty and the exercise of the stern Roman discipline did Regulus compel the obedience even of his officers. The ideas prevalent at Rome regarding the country may be expressed, perhaps, in the popular story—of which, indeed, there is no trace in the sober histories of the campaign—that the invading army was detained on the banks of the river Bagrada, not by the numbers or valour of the Carthaginians, but by the venomous breath of a mighty serpent a hundred and forty feet in length.

The progress of the Romans was, however, not to be so arrested. They defeated the enemy in various encounters, captured great numbers of prisoners, and amassed a vast quantity of plunder. The Senate, elated at the assurance of Regulus that he had already shut up the Carthaginians within the walls of their city, allowed themselves to weaken his force by recalling his colleague with one half of the legions. With the remaining half Regulus succeeded in taking Tunes and killing or capturing many thousands of his opponents. But the Carthaginians, after making many horrid sacrifices of human victims, adopted the more effective expedient of calling in the aid of Xanthippus, a Spartan general of skill and

courage. It was to Xanthippus at least that the Romans attributed the military genius by which they were induced to come to battle at a disadvantage, and were once more overthrown, not so much by the valour of the Carthaginians as by the brute force of their elephants. However this may be, Carthage was saved; the invaders were utterly worsted, Regulus and a large part of his army made prisoners. Xanthippus was sent home with a splendid

U.C. 499. recompense, but the Romans, in their spite against their
B.C. 255. enemies, were induced to believe that the Carthaginians, jealous of the service he had done them, put him on board a leaky vessel and caused it to founder in mid-passage.

Nor was this the only spiteful invention of the vanquished people. They gave out a story, which was easily received and long believed, that Regulus, being sent to Rome to negotiate terms which he himself dissuaded his countrymen from accepting, had returned with romantic fidelity upon their rejection, well aware of the fate which surely awaited him, to be put to death with an excess of ingenious cruelty by the base and brutal Carthaginians. Of this story it might be enough to say that there exists no trace of it in the approved historian of these transactions; but it must be added that even the Roman writers themselves recorded stories of similar cruelties on their own part as practised upon captives from Carthage, and there appears too much reason to suspect that the legend of Regulus is no better than an attempt to parry by a counter-charge the evidence of their own barbarity. Whatever indeed may be the value of this particular story, we can hardly doubt, from many recorded instances, that both nations were equally capable of the most odious atrocities.

The result, however, of the expedition of Regulus profoundly affected the Romans. Though not without some further successes to extenuate their great loss, and the destruction of another Carthaginian fleet before their stronghold at Clypea, they determined to abandon their attempt and quit the ill-fated shores of the African continent. It was only by the full possession of the sea that they could hope to retain their footing there, and their timely retreat was speedily justified by the loss of a large armament by tempest. Two hundred and seventy of their vessels were dashed in pieces on the Sicilian coast near Camarina. The Carthaginians reaped the full advantage of these disasters. They took strong measures against the subjects who had been encouraged to revolt in their own country, and made vigorous preparations for carrying the war once

more into Sicily. Before the Romans had recovered from their dismay at their recent losses they had equipped a new fleet and embarked a new army, with a hundred and forty elephants. With this force they made a descent upon Agrigentum and speedily retook it. But the Senate was diligent also. In the course of three months, as we read with renewed surprise, the Romans had constructed an armament of two hundred and twenty galleys, and the consuls wafted the legions once more to the Sicilian coast, where they succeeded in carrying off slaves and booty, and established themselves in the important city of Panormus. This success they followed up the next year with an expedition against the African coast, but their object was only to plunder and to terrify, and again they suffered severe loss by tempests. Once more great discouragement fell upon the Senate, and it was resolved to confine the efforts of Rome at sea to the defence of its own shores. The legions which had taken up their quarters in Sicily seem to have felt themselves abandoned, and while their leaders declined to engage the enemy in the field, and retired into their strongholds, it was only by the exercise of stern discipline, to the extent of degrading on one occasion four hundred of the knights, and of passing a tribune under the lictors' rods and axe on another, that the spirit of the army could be sustained. The Carthaginian general, Hasdrubel, was encouraged to make an attack upon the army in Panormus. But the Romans were commanded by the illustrious Cæcilius Metellus, who, allowing his assailants to approach the walls, put their elephants to flight by his missiles, and when these treacherous allies had thrown the ranks of the Carthaginians into confusion attacked them with all his forces in flank, and gained over them a complete victory. A hundred elephants, captured and conveyed to Rome, were exposed to be U.C. 504. hunted by the populace in the circus, and the Romans at B.C. 250. last made up their minds that the monsters of Africa were not really formidable adversaries.

Their signal defeat at Panormus disposed the Carthaginians to make overtures for peace, and it was with this view that they sent Regulus, as before noticed, to negotiate an exchange of prisoners. When this attempt failed both parties, it would seem, were too much exhausted to meet in full force in the field. The Carthaginians fortified themselves in the strong places of the western part of the island. In the autumn of the year 250 the Romans blockaded Lilybæum by sea and land, but they found it beyond their power

to prevent assistance reaching it from Africa. The Carthaginian general Himilco obtained renown by his skilful defence on the land side, rendered the more difficult by the treachery of his mercenaries, the peril from which his countrymen were never free. While the Carthaginian fleet was lying in wait in the neighbouring port of Drepanum the consul Claudius would have gone forth to attack it. Omens were consulted; the sacred chickens refused to eat. 'Let them drink,' he profanely exclaimed, casting them into the sea, and set forth on his expedition. His impiety did not remain unpunished. The battle of Drepanum resulted in a great disaster to the Romans both by land and water. Junius, the colleague of Claudius, U.C. 505. suffered at the same time no less discomfiture by shipwreck off Camarina. B.C. 249. The Senate again renounced its attempts at sea, and recalled the consuls, who killed themselves to avoid a trial. Thus another Claudius distinguished himself for his audacity and insolence. He had made himself odious to the people by his severity as much as by his misfortunes. When his sister found herself one day incommoded by the pressure of the populace she exclaimed, 'Would to God that my brother still commanded the Roman armies.' The people resented and the ædiles punished a cry which implied that the haughty matron would gladly have seen her countrymen compelled to serve and driven to inevitable slaughter.

While mentioning the names of the Roman leaders we must not omit to signalise those of Carthage, who made themselves illustrious at this crisis of their country's history. Besides Himilco, who had so gallantly defended Lilybæum, there was a Hannibal, less famous indeed than another of the name who will soon fill all our canvas, who threw the reinforcements into it; Adherbal, the victor of Drepanum; and Carthalo, who had made descents upon the maritime towns of Southern Italy. But a greater figure than any of these is Hamilcar, surnamed we may believe for his impetuous daring Barcas, or the Lightning, the very title which the Roman poet gave to the Scipio who at a later time contended victoriously against his son. Hamilcar knew how to stifle the disloyalty of his mercenaries by leading them to the rich booty of Italy on the shore of Bruttium. Having satisfied their rapacity he could count for a time at least on their valour; and seizing by a skilful movement on the station of mount Eretè, near Lilybæum, he was enabled to keep watch in security upon all the movements of the Romans in that quarter. The Carthaginians were too strongly posted to be removed from the

spots on which they had fastened, and both parties continued for six years to check each other without coming to a decisive struggle. The Romans had withdrawn from the sea. The Carthaginians, finding themselves free to roam throughout the Mediterranean, allowed their armies to remain in Sicily unsupported, and devoted themselves again to the extension of their commerce and the acquisition of petty gains. Then again did the Senate perceive its opportunity. In all haste it gave the word to construct yet another fleet. The treasury was empty, but the people filled it with voluntary offerings. An armament of two hundred galleys was speedily equipped, and led by Lutatius Catulus to Drepanum at the close of winter, before the Carthaginians had put to sea. The Romans seized the port and enforced the blockade, which Hamilcar found himself too late to intercept. A great victory they now gained at the Ægates islands rendered the Romans masters of the situation. The blockaded armies, however strongly posted, could not long hold out for want of provisions. The Carthaginians, disheartened and wearied by the length of a war which pressed so severely upon their resources as a commercial people, once more made offers of accommodation. Hamilcar, who proudly refused to capitulate, was allowed to march out of his stronghold with his arms and ensigns; but Carthage was bound by the terms of peace to respect the independence of Hiero and the Greeks in Sicily, to give up all her own acquisitions in that much-coveted island, to restore her prisoners, and to pay to Rome a considerable indemnity. So ended the First Punic war, after a struggle of twenty-four years' duration, which, according to the statement of Polybius, cost the worsted party five hundred and the conquerors seven hundred galleys, and these not triremes such as had fought in the wars of Greece with Persia or of Athens with Sparta, but quinqueremes, the larger and costlier vessels of that later age. The exertions made by the Romans were indeed enormous, but they sufficed to establish her military and naval renown upon an equal footing. Her bravery, her skill, and her fortitude, thus tried and approved, seemed to mark her out already for the conquest of the world.

U.C. 513.

B.C. 241.

CHAPTER XIX.

Interval between the first and second Punic war—The Romans occupy themselves with the reduction of Sardinia and Corsica, with conquests in Illyria, and interfere in the affairs of Greece—They effect the conquest of the Cisalpine Gauls—The Carthaginians are engaged in a contest with their revolted mercenaries—The rivalry of Hamilcar and Hanno—The war party under Hamilcar obtain the predominance—Progress of the Carthaginians in Spain, and reduction of Saguntum by Hannibal—Progress of internal corruption at Rome—The Floralia and the shows of gladiators—(B.C. 240–219).

It may seem remarkable that throughout the long crisis of the Punic war the nations of Italy, so lately subjected to Rome, should have made no attempt to take their ancient foe at a disadvantage and strike a blow for the recovery of their independence. The remark is one which we may be tempted to repeat on many later occasions. It was the good policy of Rome rather than her good fortune that secured her safety at moments when hardly any other people would have escaped. We read, not perhaps without a smile, that immediately on the conclusion of this deadly contest she was engaged in a contest with the Faliscans, the same little people who had been the very earliest of her rivals in the time of Romulus. Rome now put out her little finger, and of course Falerii collapsed. At the same instant Carthage became involved in a desperate struggle with her own mercenary forces, through the same fatal flaw in her policy which had kept her in constant alarm for so many years, and only came out of it eventually triumphant after several years of bloody warfare and acts of terrible cruelty and bloodshed. The Romans seem from the first to have associated their subjects in their own enterprizes on almost equal terms, not merely giving them their stipulated pay, which any disaster might have obliged them to withhold or to curtail, but allowing them to partake with equal measure in the enjoyment or hope of booty, while they retained their own national identity, their laws and manners, and to a great extent the appearance at least of independence. The warriors who fought by the side of the Romans were her allies; those who marched along with the Carthaginians, or rather who supplied the place of the Carthaginians themselves, were soldiers, or rather servants on wages. Whatever, then, may have been the cause of the rising of the Falisci at this moment, it presented no symptom of serious significance. Doubtless it was a casual ebullition, speedily put

down, and leaving no trace behind it. The wound inflicted on Carthage by the defection of her army, and the slaughter of her bravest defenders, continued long to rankle. Not only was it a great material loss in itself, but it contributed to the development of her own domestic factions; Hamilcar taking the lead of the martial and popular element, while Hanno represented the jealousy of the aristocracy and the Senate. For more than one generation these two factions continued to watch and work one against the other, while the fortunes of their country hung in the balance between them.

The first contest of Rome and Carthage had lasted almost twenty-four years, and a period of equal length, bating one year only, intervened before they came actively into collision again. Each power had learnt to respect and fear the other, and neither was anxious to renew the inevitable struggle for dominion for which each set itself sedulously to prepare. Both nations, in fact, made great conquests during this interval. The Romans consolidated Sicily, in the first place, into a province, as they styled a conquest beyond their frontiers, and fixed their hands upon it with a grasp which they never afterwards relaxed. Sicily was the first of the so-called provinces of the Roman empire—the first of the vast agglomeration of territories which eventually embraced the whole extent of its dominion beyond the central region of Italy itself. The republic allowed, indeed, the little kingdom of Hiero to retain its actual existence, under strict conditions of alliance, if not of tribute. To some of the Sicilian states, such as Messana, which had done her essential service, she conceded autonomy. Others were admitted within the circle of her dominion on various conditions; but the province was placed substantially under Roman government, administered by a Roman officer under the name of prætor, and required to surrender large portions of its territory to Roman proprietors, and pay a yearly tithe of corn and other produce. By a peculiar and politic provision the citizens of the several states were forbidden to sell and buy land one with another. They might only sell—and, impoverished as they were by the war, there were no doubt plenty of vendors—to Roman purchasers. Thus a large portion of the soil of Sicily soon passed into the hands of the conquering race. The largest and most fertile island in the Mediterranean was thus reduced to dependence, with no further cost of men or money. Sardinia and Corsica were soon after subdued, but not without the effort of more than one campaign, and some loss of Roman blood. The mercenaries of Carthage quartered therein

betrayed them to the Romans, and the Romans forbade the Carthaginians, with the threat of renewed hostilities, to assist the natives in their defence, which was thus rendered hopeless. They fell a prey to the slave-hunters of the Italian markets, which from this time were largely replenished from among them. These islands were also formed into a province, and another prætor—making a fourth officer bearing that title—was sent year by year to govern them.

Rome no longer feared to lose the command of the sea and the means of maintaining her maritime conquests. On the contrary, she was prepared to extend her dominions across the water in another direction also. The security of her coasts on the Adriatic, or Upper Sea, required her to hunt down the piratical powers on the opposite shores of Illyria. The numerous bays and inlets of that coast had ever tended to foster the spirit of marauding to which they held out such ready protection. The attempt to root out these nests of piracy led the Romans step by step into conflict with some and alliance with other established powers on the continent. Some details of their transactions in this region are preserved to us in a special work of good authority, but they furnish little matter of interest. The Romans conducted themselves with their usual policy in offering their services to Demetrius, a dependent of Teuta, the powerful queen of the Illyrians, and aiding him to shake off her authority over Corcyra. This island was ceded to the republic; and Apollonia and Epidamnus, surrendering themselves, were allowed to retain the privilege of nominal liberty. The dealings of Rome with the people of Illyria led her insensibly into relations with the western states of Greece, which suffered as well as Italy from the lawless habits of the buccaneers of the Adriatic, and welcomed the vigour of the young Italian republic in its operation against them. Rome was hailed by Greece as an ally, and

U.O. 526. as in some sense akin to her, and was solemnly invited to
B.C. 228. take part in the great Hellenic festival of the Isthmian games. The Athenians, in their enthusiasm for a race of heroes, accorded to the Roman people the franchise of their own city, and gave them admission to the Eleusinian mysteries.

These advances, however, tended but indirectly to increase the compact strength which Rome might wield either for attack or for defence. Far more important in this respect was the conquest she now definitively made of the whole territory of the Gauls between her own northern frontier and the Alps. The furthest positions

she had hitherto established in this direction were at Ariminum, on the upper, and Luca, on the lower coast. The whole valley of the Po and the ridges of the northern Apennines were still in the power of the Gauls who had so often mastered, and continued even new to defy and sometimes to insult her. The Gauls, indeed, were divided among themselves; the Boii and the Senones, the nearest to the Etruscan and Umbrian frontier, were constantly harassed by the Cenomani, the Insubres, the Ligurians, and other predatory tribes at their back. The poverty of the Alpine defiles was itself a standing menace to the fruitful plains of the cispadane region. It was fortunate for Rome that her deadliest enemies were perhaps occupied by the defence of their own homesteads at the time when she was herself most desperately engaged in her long conflict with Carthage. Presently, however, these Gauls also gathered up their strength for another assault upon the wealthy regions of the South.

Nor were the cisalpine Gauls without support from their brethren beyond the Alps. The restless spirit of the great Gaulish nation in its own native recesses, though long appeased, had not been extinguished. The cry went forth for a repetition of the ancient invasions, and a large body of transalpine Gauls enlisted themselves in the armies which the Senones and the Boii had been for some years quietly equipping, not for a desultory inroad, as in former times, but with a definite view of conquest. Such at least was the form which in the imagination of the Romans this new attack was destined to assume. The old terrors revived, the old superstitions resumed their potency. The Capitol was struck with lightning, and this it seems was regarded as a prodigy. The Sibylline books were consulted; and the reply ran thus: 'When the lightning strikes the Capitol, beware of the Gauls.' There was, moreover, a prophecy current that the Greeks and Gauls should one day occupy the Roman forum. The priests declared that the omen might be averted, and the prophecy satisfied, by the inter-
ment of two Gauls, male and female, and two Greeks, in
the centre of the city; and with the accomplishment of this horrid sacrifice the spirit of the people revived.

The Romans, however, were no idle fatalists. They did not neglect the necessary human means for securing the events which they believed to be sanctioned by the powers above them. They declared a state of 'Gallic tumult,' and called all their people to arms. They enrolled legions to be sent to the front and forces to be kept in reserve. They required every city to put itself in a

B.C. 226.
A.U. 528.

state of defence, and furnish itself with magazines and provisions. Above all, they took care to gain over useful auxiliaries to act in the rear of their enemies, and engaged the Cenomani and the Veneti to threaten the Cisalpine territories if the Gaulish armies should venture to advance beyond them. Thus the invaders were crippled at the outset; they were constrained to leave a large portion of their strength behind them, and could not pour into the Roman territory more than 50,000 foot and 20,000 horse, a number with which the Romans might be fully capable of coping. In fact, whether the Gauls elected to descend into Central Italy by the road of Umbria, or by that of Etruria, they might find a force of Romans and allies of not inferior strength to intercept them on either. For Rome had within her Italian dominions an aggregate of 350,000 men capable of bearing arms.

The Gauls, however, were not dismayed by the odds they had to encounter. They adroitly thrust themselves between the two armies to the right and to the left, crossed the Apennines, and descended into the valley of the Arno, following their ancient track towards Clusium. One Roman force presently closed in upon them, but was repulsed, and only saved from destruction by the opportune arrival of a second, before which the Gauls, sated with a first victory, and enriched with plunder, were not unwilling to retreat. They evaded the pursuit of the two armies which now continued to harass them, and were making their way homeward along the coast of the Lower Sea, near the mouth of the Arno, when they found themselves unexpectedly confronted by yet a third Roman army, which had just landed at Pisa from an expedition against the revolted Sardinians. Thus surrounded, the invaders were completely overpowered, not, however, without the slaughter of C. Regulus, one of the Roman consuls. The other consul, Æmilius, U.C. 529. claimed the honour of the victory, and after entering the B.C. 225. Gaulish territory and carrying off much plunder from it, enjoyed the honours of a triumph.

The Gauls, though baffled in their invasion of Italy, were not easily overcome within the limits of their own country, to which the war was now transferred, and in which it continued to rage for the space of three years. The contest was rendered illustrious by the character and exploits of the Roman chiefs engaged in it. Of these C. Flaminius was a leader of the popular party which began now to make itself conspicuous in opposition to the magnates or ruling aristocracy of the city. He was a favourite of the people

on account of the assignment of lands he had made them in the neighbourhood of Ariminum, and it was their favour that maintained him at the head of one of the consular armies. His opposition to the interest of the nobles was evinced by the contempt with which he cast aside the trammels of augury. When the Senate in their jealousy sent letters requiring him to refrain from an engagement on account of the omens which had been observed by their agents, he refused to read them until he had fought and won. This done, he ceremoniously opened the missives in the presence of his soldiers and declared that it was now too late to obey them. He continued his operations, gained fresh successes and greater heaps of plunder, and at the end of the campaign demanded a triumph as his reward. The Senate, piqued at his insolence, refused to grant it. The people interfered, with their tribunes at their head, and decreed him full honours by a vote of U.C. 531.

their assembly. But Flaminius has secured himself B.C. 223. honour more solid and enduring, as the builder of the great Flaminian Way, the direct road from Rome to the Gallic frontier near Ariminum, which became the highway of the legions for so many centuries on their route from the capital to the northern provinces. For henceforth the Cisalpine was brought into close connexion with the capital of the republic. The Flaminian Way was thrust forth from the city, as the arm to strike her deadliest enemy at any moment and at the shortest notice.

Another hero of this flourishing epoch was M. Claudius Marcellus, consul in the year B.C. 222. For more than a hundred years previously the plebeian family of the Marcelli had distinguished itself in the annals of the city, and it often occurs afterwards in the historic roll of the republic and the empire. U.C. 532.

But none of the race rendered himself so illustrious as the leader of the legions in the campaign which effected the conquest of the Cisalpine. The conduct of the war against the Insubres, backed as they were by a large force from Gaul beyond the Alps, was entrusted to both the consuls together; but the fame of Calvus Scipio was eclipsed by that of his colleague. Marcellus gained a brilliant victory singly at Clastidium. It was by the united forces of the two consuls that Mediolanum, the most important position of the Gauls beyond the Po, was taken and finally subjected to Rome. To the great Marcellus attaches a more romantic glory for his slaying of the Gaulish king Viridomarus in personal combat. To carry off royal spoils, and dedicate the *spolia opima*, or prize of prizes, to Jupiter Feretrius

in the Capitol, was the highest distinction a Roman could attain. Such had been the exploit of Tullus Hostilius, and of Romulus before him ; but it was reserved for Marcellus to make this glorious offering for the third and last time in the course of all Roman history. Marcellus obtained the consulship not less than five times, and performed many signal services ; but when the national poet Virgil distributes their meed of praise among the greatest heroes of his country this is the special exploit he selects wherewith to commemorate him. The conquest of the Cisalpine was consolidated by the building of a military road in advance from Ariminum to the foot of the Alps. Colonies were planted at Cremona and Placentia. In the following year the Roman eagles were borne into the peninsula of Istria, and access by land was thereby secured into the regions beyond the Adriatic. The empire of Rome was marching onwards with the steps of a giant. But the ambition of the Senate still outstripped them. It pretended to enter into an alliance with the king of Egypt, and offered—so at least it was reported—to send him an auxiliary force to wage his wars against his rival in Syria.

Marcellus gained a triumph over the Gauls and Germans. This is the first time that the name appears of this latter people with whom Rome came at a later period into the most desperate conflict. But at the moment it was no doubt little heeded. Another nation was now beginning to appear on the scene, which was to occupy an important place in the affairs of the republic. It was in compliment, perhaps, to the most formidable of her foes that, close upon the termination of her first war with Carthage, Rome declared that the gates of Janus should be shut, for now she was at peace with all the world. We have seen how far from the actual truth this declaration was, for during the twenty years that next ensued there seems to have been none in which she was not engaged more or less in hostilities. Her operations, indeed, in Sardinia and Illyria were mere skirmishing forays ; but in the Gauls at least she confronted an enemy whom she could not pretend to despise. She was content during this interval to watch, to restrain, and to overthrow this importunate troubler of her frontier, and leave her greatest rival to conduct her own affairs without molestation. But her destiny soon impelled her to meet Carthage on another field, and we must now turn our eyes to the Iberian peninsula on which she next encountered her.

The Carthaginians had effected the subjugation of their revolted mercenaries, and when they attempted to avert the loss of Sardinia,

and found that Rome would not brook any such interference, they had sullenly withdrawn from it. But new views and other operations were opening to them. The veteran Hamilcar, finding himself thwarted and coerced at home by the aristocratic faction under the leadership of Hanno, had turned his energies in the direction of Spain, a vast and fruitful region, which he undertook to reduce completely under the sway of Carthage. Hispania, or Iberia, was indeed at this time a splendid prize for the greatest of the nations to acquire. The country abounded in gold mines, and the gold of Eastern Europe and even of Asia, as far as it was known, had become almost exhausted. But still more was Spain rich in men. Her poor and sparse population were for the most part hardy mountaineers, apt for martial exercises, and eager to lend their energies to the first leaders who would bid for them. Inured to war among themselves, they spared their captives in order to sell them, not so much for slaves as for soldiers. The conquest of Iberia would secure for the fortunate conqueror great store of the precious metals, large openings for commerce, and an inexhaustible supply of willing and vigorous recruits.

The jealousy which the Senate of Carthage entertained of its ablest general may readily be accounted for. A city flourishing by commerce, and devoted to an industry which may occasionally profit by war, but cannot exercise it long together without danger, could not fail to look with apprehension on the schemes, however specious, in which its great captain delighted. But Hamilcar, having once extorted from it permission to wage his warfare in Spain, was at no loss to make the war self-maintaining. By mingling in the politics of the natives, and taking the part of one tribe or chief against another, he won his way from post to post, and rapidly effected the subjugation of large portions of their territory. He used the booty thus acquired to bribe his adversaries at home, and probably the mass of his countrymen were soon dazzled by the splendour of the results he obtained for them. The popular or Barcine faction acquired a preponderance in the conduct of affairs. When after some years of successful aggressions Hamilcar was himself slain in the depths of Lusitania, the people insisted on the appointment of his son-in-law, Hasdrubal, to complete his undertakings.

The soldier was succeeded in this case by the statesman. The policy of Hasdrubal tended to consolidate the conquests of Hamilcar, and conciliate to the rule of Carthage the numerous tribes which had been rapidly overrun, but which had never yet submitted to

dwell in unity even among themselves. But the qualities of the new chief recommended him to the Spaniards; their princes eagerly sought his friendship, and laid aside their intestine feuds at his instance. He was beginning to weld them together into a strong and united confederacy under the direction of his own republic, and had established a convenient base for the operations he meditated in the port of New Carthage, or Carthagera, one of the best harbours in the Mediterranean, as well as the nearest on the Spanish coast to the Punic capital. The Romans were alarmed, and interfered to thwart him. Under threat of renewing the war, for which he was as yet unprepared, they required him to enter into a compact by which the advance of the Carthaginians was to be bounded by the Ebro. The Romans perhaps already contemplated the extension of their own relations with the peoples beyond the Pyrenees, but in the meantime they professed to intervene in the interest of the Massalians, with whom they had formed bonds of alliance as a check upon the transalpine Gauls. But they too had come to terms with at least one people to the south of the Ebro, for the Saguntines, who dwelt on the coast near the Segre, had sought their protection. Having taken these precautions, and appealing at the same time to the faith of the treaty whereby the rival republics had bound themselves not to molest each other's allies, they awaited the course of events with renewed confidence.

In the year B.C. 221 Hasdrubal perished by the hand of a Gaulish slave in revenge for the slaying of his master. The armies of Carthage throughout her Iberian territories put themselves under the command of Hannibal, the son of the brave Hamilcar, and in face of the army the factions of the capital were reduced to silence. The famous Hannibal was at this time twenty-six years of age. From his childhood he had attended the progress of the Carthaginian arms in Spain, and had there learnt the art of war from his father, and of government from his brother-in-law. It was at the trying moment when Carthage was constrained to yield to the threats of Rome, and desist from the attempt to recover Sardinia from her revolted mercenaries, that Hamilcar, preparing to divert the forces of his country to new conquests on the continent of Europe, performed a solemn sacrifice for the success of his meditated enterprise. At the close of the ceremony he called his son, then aged nine years, to his side and asked if he would like to accompany him. Pleased with the ardour with which the child accepted the offer, he bade him devote himself once for all to the service of his country,

B.C. 533.

B.C. 221.

and swear with his hand upon the altar, that he would never be the friend of the Romans. Thus solemnly dedicated to the patriotic work, Hannibal grew up under a keen sense of his obligation, and cherished through all the trials of his Iberian campaigns the resolution to avenge some day upon Rome the shame and injuries of Carthage. From the courage, the training, and the fanatical spirit of this young general the Romans felt at once that they had much to apprehend. They were just about to enter upon decisive operations for the final reduction of Illyria, which they carried out in the year 219; but the Saguntines appealed to them for protection against the attacks of Hannibal, and they sent ambassadors to his quarters to remind him of the treaty, and sternly forbid him to meddle with their allies, still less to carry his arms beyond the Ebro. Twice already they had checked the designs of Carthage by the threat of their displeasure. Once more they relied upon her fears, but the third time the spell was broken; the young hero with whom they had to deal cared not to lay their appeal before his Senate, which he barely professed to serve. He was prepared to act for himself and his country, which had placed her interests once for all in his hands. While the consuls, confident of the success of their policy, were leading two armies across the sea to Illyria, he proceeded to crown the two campaigns he had already conducted against some Spanish peoples with a third against Saguntum itself, the last stronghold within the line of the Ebro which remained to curtail the full dominion of Carthage in that quarter. The defence of Saguntum was obstinate, and Rome, in compliment to the cause in which it was maintained, condescended to invest it with immortal glory; but she had no means at hand to assist in it, and when all their resources were exhausted the people destroyed themselves and their city in a fire kindled by their own savage desperation.

The republic of Carthage, an older foundation than that of Rome, had advanced a hundred years beyond its rival in political development. The popular element in its constitution had assumed a more prominent position, and had sapped the strength of the executive power together with the aristocracy which had so long and so vigorously wielded it. Whatever had been the defects and the crimes of the old Punic Senate, proud, aggressive, and tyrannical as no doubt it had proved itself both at home and abroad, it had had at least the merit, like other aristocracies, of holding definite objects, and of carrying them out thoroughly and effectively. It had

U.C. 516.
B.C. 238.

U.C. 535.
B.C. 219.

allowed itself at last to rest too securely upon its material forces, and when its mighty instrument, the great mercenary army upon which it rested, failed in its hands, it soon yielded to the assaults of the popular party within its own walls, long envious of its power and groaning under its supremacy. The defeat it now suffered might seem a signal retribution, and forebode to superficial observers the commencement of a better and higher state of national existence. During the long peace with Rome which followed the first Punic war, and the final suppression of the revolt of the soldiery, Carthage might hope to spring into new life, and repair, under the sway of the Barcine or popular faction, the exhaustion of her long exertions. But this revival was in fact delusive. It meant no less than the surrender of the forces of the state into the hands of her military leaders. The government of the republic was now transferred from the city to the camp. It was not at Old Carthage, in the councils of the Senate or even in the assemblies of the people, that her policy was to be determined, but rather at New Carthage, in the tent of her ablest captain, swayed perhaps himself by the demands of his officers and his soldiers. When the Senate accepted the nomination of Hannibal by the army in Spain it gave itself a chief and submitted its policy to his dictation. Its fate was the same that befell, as we shall see, the Senate of the rival republic a hundred years later, when the long-dominant aristocracy of Rome was constrained, under the pressure of an armed democracy, to follow the course prescribed by the leaders of its legions in the provinces. But Rome possessed many legions and many provinces, and accordingly many military leaders. As long as she could play off one of these tyrants against another she might flatter herself with the hope of maintaining the balance between them. But this was a policy which could not fail to lead to civil war, and civil war must inevitably result in the supremacy of the strongest, and thus eventually Rome was compelled to accept the wars imposed upon her by a Sulla or a Cæsar, just as Carthage now submitted to be controlled by the decisions of a Hannibal.

The safeguard which the Romans invented against a public danger which they could not fail to foresee was the rule by which their consuls and the chiefs of their consular armies were annually superseded by fresh appointments. Even within the limits of Italy, and at the distance of only a few days from Rome, it was not always convenient to hand over the command of the legions from one general to a successor with a staff and following of his own choice.

When the outposts of the republic were stationed far beyond the Upper and Lower seas it was actually impracticable. It became necessary to extend the imperium of the proconsuls in the provinces to a period of five years; but with a reign even thus limited they were enabled to mould the legions to their will and create private interests which made them not less formidable to the state than to its enemies. When this five years' rule was occasionally prolonged, as in the case of Cæsar, or extended over many provinces, as in the case of Pompeius, the impending revolution was virtually accomplished. Opportunity only was wanting, and could not be far distant, for transforming the Roman republic into a monarchy.

At the period, however, with which we are now concerned these dangers were remote and at least not generally apparent. The constitution of Rome was hanging for the moment in a state of unstable equilibrium. The privileges of the aristocracy, as represented by the patricians in the Senate and the curies, had been actually overthrown by the gradual encroachments of the plebs. The Licinian, the Publilian, and the Hortensian laws had firmly established the equal eligibility to every magistracy of the elder and the later races of Roman citizens. The rivalry of classes in the state had ceased to be a rivalry of blood and origin, and even in the normal struggle between the rich and poor the weight of legal sanction was thrown into the scale of numbers against property. The supreme power was actually invested in the comitia of the tribes, which represented numbers only. The comitia of the curies, which had formerly represented birth, were completely suppressed, and those of the centuries, which gave influence to wealth, had been for the most part deprived of real authority. The constitution of Rome was accordingly strongly democratic. But it was the peculiar fortune of the Romans—in which hardly one or two other communities, ancient or modern, have equalled them—that the spirit of the aristocracy survived among them together with democratic forms. Rome was still practically governed by her Optimates, a small body of men of wealth and birth and ancestral nobility. Her magistrates at home, her generals abroad were almost uniformly nobles, a term which the Romans themselves invented to designate men ennobled or signalized by the career of public office which their fathers had exercised before them. Yet, by another stroke of good fortune, the nobles maintained no actual monopoly of office. Rome admitted, however sparingly and grudgingly, the accession to her councils of New men, another term invented by her to distinguish the aspirants to

public honours, who rose in every generation from the ranks of the commonalty, and who by their abilities or their good fortune attained to this nobility of office themselves and founded noble houses for their children.

This happy balance of the constitution could be but of transient duration. It betokened the moment, most precious in the life of a nation, when democracy was established by law, but aristocracy was still dear to sentiment. It was grounded upon a true moral sense, and a just appreciation of the duty of self-control which is given to few communities to attain, and to none to preserve beyond a brief season. The decline of this high feeling at Rome was already just becoming apparent, and it may be well at this place to notice a few particulars in which the austere principles of her moral character were already trembling to their fall.

The sanctity, for instance, of matron-life was a cardinal foundation of Roman morality. It was not merely upon the chastity of their wives, it was upon their loyalty and fidelity, that the Romans built up the life of the family. Among the laws they had made for the honour and security of the marriage-state they had made no provision for divorce; in the good old time the contingency of a crime which should burst the bonds of honourable marriage had not occurred to their imaginations. Or perhaps they were content to leave it to be dealt with under the exceptional authority which they granted to the head of the family over his goods, his chattels, his wife, and his children. But the time had arrived when special legislation was required, though the occasion for it was not a crime but only a misfortune. The wife of Spurius Carvilius was barren. The fortunes of an aristocratic house depended on the birth of children, and Spurius (we may infer perhaps

B.C. 231. from his name that he represented the bluest blood of the patricians) required the enactment of a law to enable him to repudiate her. But the measure was of evil example. The law of divorce became more widely extended, and more frequently resorted to, and nothing tended more to sap the morals of the Romans than the laxity which was thus introduced into the holiest and most delicate of all human relations.

The religious system of Rome at the same time had become fixed in sterile rigidity, which might seem to portend imminent decay and transformation. The ancient usages of the Italian and Etruscan nations remained entire; but whatever spiritual principles may have at one time germinated within them, little beyond the

mere husk now survived. There was no spiritual doctrine, no moral teaching, not even any intellectual discipline, in the superstitions practised by the pontiff, the aruspex, or the augur. All their observances had no other object than to avert a temporal injury or acknowledge a temporal benefit. Believing all Providence to be merely destiny, and destiny to be impassive and inflexible, the service of the Romans consisted only in an impulsive effort to bend what could not be bent, to touch the feelings of what was incapable of feeling at all. With such strain put upon a reasonable faith, doubt was always at hand to check her aspirations, and disbelief pressed hard upon the skirts of doubt. So it was that the noble family of the Potitii were found to have abandoned to their slaves the cult of Hercules entrusted to the hereditary care of their family. So it was that the consul Claudius flung the sacred chickens into the sea when they failed to present him with the omens he required. Such impieties had been before committed, just as some wives had been actually repudiated before the law of divorce had sanctioned it, but now it was that the conscience of Rome was first awakened to notice the fact, and to portend the worse irregularities that would follow. The eyes of the people began to open, and they looked abroad for religious usages which might give them more satisfaction than their own antiquated superstitions. They found, indeed, little to content them, but it was a relief to bring over to Rome even the hollow services of the gods of Greece and Asia. Ambassadors were solemnly sent to Epidaurus to solicit the gift of a statue of Æsculapius, a deity of at least some practical beneficence; and not many years after the period at which we are arrived a new religious excitement was discovered, a fresh revival, as we should say, was exhibited, in the introduction of the sensational worship of the Good Goddess, or the Phrygian Cybele. But this last revival was itself perhaps a consequence of the horrors of the war which was about to recommence. The progress of impiety was arrested by the public alarm, but the principle of religion was only diverted from its earlier channel into another, for moral and spiritual purposes no whit more efficacious than the first.

Two other incidents may be mentioned, each of which, though of no obvious significance, was in fact the precursor of great moral changes in the character of the Roman people. The year u.c. 516. 238 B.C. was noted for the introduction of the popular spectacle of the Floralia, which was properly the dedication of the first fruits of the year at the opening of the summer season. Simple,

and innocent in the idea on which it was founded, common as it is to almost all peoples in the early periods of their social existence, this solemnity, in the hands of the Romans at this critical moment of their moral being, was speedily degraded into an orgie of sensual dissipation, and became throughout the long period of their social decline the most notorious of their many schools of national impurity. Within two years of its institution was born M. Porcius Cato, the austere and pedantic censor of worldwide celebrity, and it was noted of this man that on straying, perhaps inadvertently, into the theatre where the Floralia were being exhibited, he felt constrained to turn his back upon them and flee from the contamination of the spectacle.

The institution of the gladiatorial shows preceded that of the Floralia by several years. The tragedy came before the comedy.

U.C. 490.

B.C. 264.

It was in the first year of the first Punic war that a Marcus and Decimus Brutus set forth in public a combat between swordsmen at the obsequies of their father. After this commencement the practice spread rapidly. From an accompaniment of the funeral rites of the highest nobles it became a common spectacle, produced on the arena of the public theatres, for the enjoyment of the populace on many solemn festive occasions. The rude and fierce captives of foreign warfare furnished the first victims to this bloody entertainment. The usage soon assumed form and system. Regular troops of slaves were kept in schools, as they were called, and trained by wealthy citizens, to be brought upon the stage when occasion might require. The shows of human combatants became a recognised portion of the apparatus with which the candidates for public office amused and bribed the populace. At a later period it was found perhaps cheaper to replace these expensive subjects with the refuse of the prisons, or rather, when the suffrage of the people ceased to have a political value, few cared to incur the charge of breeding up victims for their amusement. The Romans indulged themselves with the conceit that these cruel spectacles of useless skill and valour helped to train them in sentiments of manly pride and contempt of wounds and death. Throughout all that remains of their literature hardly a whisper is heard of disgust or disapproval of them. The better spirits among them appear, indeed, under the influence of a milder civilization, to have tacitly withdrawn themselves from the amphitheatre; but no true critic of human nature can now fail to trace to their influence the hardening of the heart and conscience of the mass of the Roman people.

CHAPTER XX.

Hannibal crosses the Alps and invades Italy—The battles of the Trebia, the Ticinus, and the Lake Trasimene—Great defeat of the Romans at Cannæ—Hannibal withdraws into the south of Italy, and tries to raise the Greeks and Campanians—(B.C. 218-216).

WHEN the Romans sent their envoys to Carthage to complain of the aggressions of her daring chief, and to threaten her once more with a declaration of war, her Senate temporized indeed and made some pretence of disavowing him, but was constrained at last to accept the situation, and abide the consequences. Fully employed as her rivals still were in the islands, in Illyria and in the Cisalpine, Carthage might hope at least that all the forces they yet had to spare would be directed to securing their interests in Spain, and that she would herself have no immediate cause of apprehension. It may be doubted whether her Senate was itself aware of the desperate venture upon which Hannibal had determined. The leaders of the Carthaginian forces had manœuvred against the Romans on the neutral ground of Sicily and Sardinia. They had encountered them, front to front, in defence of their own soil, when the legions had ventured to throw themselves upon the shores of Africa; but except in a few piratical expeditions on the Italian coast they had shrunk from assailing the power of Rome on her own territory. But not less than this was the supreme effort to which Hannibal now devoted himself. He knew that the conquest of Italy by the Romans was but recent; and he could not believe that the Samnites, the Etruscans, and the Lucanians had forgotten their long and fruitless struggles. He knew that Rome depended for her military strength not less upon the auxiliary bands of her dependents and subjects than upon the legions themselves, and he was too apt perhaps to confound the honourable service of the Roman citizen with the mere mercenary ties by which Carthage retained the bulk of her own forces. Above all he relied upon the implacable enmity which still subsisted between the Gauls of the Cisalpine and the enemy with whom they had so long contended, to whom they were indeed on the point of hopelessly succumbing, but who still, as he imagined, might be nerved by the arrival of fresh allies to a last effort to recover their independence. On all these points Hannibal did in fact miscalculate, and accordingly his skill, his valour, his constant

resolution were all unavailing. How far his character as a statesman is affected by these miscalculations is difficult to determine. No doubt the data on which he proceeded were in some respects of a kind which he had little means of rightly weighing. But such, it must be admitted, was the fact. Hannibal's invasion of Italy was grounded on hopes that proved utterly fallacious, and in the blindness of his imagination he did not shrink from flinging away upon it all the resources of his country which his father had so long and carefully husbanded.

Taking advantage of the employment and dispersion of the Roman legions in so many quarters, the young captain crossed the

Ebro with a force of 90,000 foot and 12,000 horse,
u.g. 526.

attended by a squadron of thirty-seven elephants, in the beginning of the summer of the year B.C. 218. With a long and difficult march of 800 miles in view across both the Pyrenees and the Alps, it may seem that the summer was already too late a period for the commencement of his expedition. From the Ebro onwards his route lay among hostile or jealous tribes, which, while they could of course offer no effectual resistance to his progress, might easily harass and retard it. He could not move so vast an armament a day's journey without levying contributions from the indignant natives, and to maintain it for months together at the sword's point required circumspection and enforced delay. At the foot of the Pyrenees he was glad to leave a detachment of 10,000 men under his brother Hasdrubal, nominally to keep a hold upon the country he had traversed, but really perhaps to reduce the numbers he had undertaken to provide for. He further dismissed an equal number of Spanish auxiliaries. In crossing the frontier, which he effected at some point near the Mediterranean coast, his army consisted of only 50,000 foot and 9,000 horse. From the Gaulish tribes between the Pyrenees and the Rhone he met with no opposition, but secured little aid or encouragement. Arrived at this river, however, he found his passage barred by the natives, and his advance delayed by the necessity of collecting boats to convey his troops across, while he sent a detachment further up the stream to find an easier passage, and so take his opponents in flank or rear. He was thus enabled to effect the trajet on the fifth day, but the season had now fallen deep into the autumn.

As Hannibal had turned the Pyrenees by taking the coast-line, so we can hardly doubt he had intended to outflank the Alps also, following the route which the Romans commonly adopted at a later

period, and along which they constructed their direct military way from Italy into Spain. Had he reached the Rhone a few weeks earlier, and been enabled to cross it and proceed onwards without impediment, he might have fallen upon the Roman outposts before he was expected, and found no legions arrayed against him. But those few weeks sufficed to baffle all his calculations.

The Romans, indeed, appear to have been taken by surprise at the expedition which Hannibal was preparing to launch against them. They had not anticipated the necessity of defending their own soil against an audacious invader, and imagined that it would remain with them to make the first attack when and where they might themselves determine. Even after the fall of Saguntum they still delayed to take vigorous measures. In the summer of the ensuing year they had collected as usual their two consular armies, of which they destined the one to act under P. Cornelius Scipio against Hannibal in Spain, the other, under Sempronius, to equip itself in Sicily for an attack upon the Carthaginians in Africa.

When news arrived at Rome that Hannibal had advanced through the territory of her allies, had passed the Pyrenees, and was in full march towards the boundary of Italy, it was necessary to change these plans straightway. The second army had, indeed, already set out on its destination, but the forces of Scipio had not yet embarked for Spain, and these were now directed to make for the coast of Gaul at Massalia, a faithful ally of the republic, and seek to intercept his progress. Scipio reached the point he aimed at, but he was just too late to occupy the banks of the Rhone and prevent the enemy from crossing it. Hannibal had already effected the passage, and Scipio first learnt of his success from the encounter of a detachment he had sent out for tidings with a body of Numidian horse, who were despatched perhaps on a similar errand. It seems that it was no part of Hannibal's plan to engage the Romans whenever he might meet with them. We can hardly suppose that the force which he had brought across the river, reduced though it doubtless was, would have been unequal to the task of meeting a consular army of two legions. But he was counting perhaps on the effect of his presence in Italy in raising the population of the country, and he would not risk the chances of defeat while the entire destruction of the Roman power seemed within his grasp. He could not fight till he had planted himself on Italian soil. He could not pit his Numidians and Spaniards against the Romans till they should be borne along in triumph by the whole mass of Gauls and Etruscans,

Samnites, Greeks, and Campanians. The whole, indeed, of Hannibal's expedition presents a series of perplexing problems; and here we are met at once with the difficulty of accounting for his avoiding a combat with Scipio, and striking out a devious course up the bank of the Rhone, through the peninsula, or island, as the historians call it, between that river and the Isère, and so to one of the most arduous passes of the Alps, probably the Little St. Bernard, when a victory over his pursuers would have at once opened to him the easy route of the Mediterranean coast-line.

The Boii of the Cisalpine had sent special envoys to engage Hannibal to make the passage of the Alps and descend into their territories, towards which they undertook to guide him. The king of the Allobroges, between the Rhone and the Isère, furnished him with supplies and clothing, and accompanied him in person to the foot of the mountains. The army of Scipio had not ventured to follow him, and was making the best of its way into Italy by the lower route, in order to meet him on his appearance in the valley of the Po. But it was now late in October, and the perilous passes were already encumbered with snow, the paths were obliterated, and little food or shelter was to be found from the foot of the mountains on the one side to the foot of the mountains on the other. The natives of these inhospitable regions proved hostile to a soldiery which was obliged to live at free quarters upon them.

The passage of the Little St. Bernard by the valley of the Tarentaise is, indeed, one of the easiest in the higher Alps, and it has often been used by travellers and by armaments before and since, but not perhaps at so late a season of the year, nor in the face of an enemy. Neither the men nor the elephants of Africa were braced to the endurance required for such an adventure. Both men and animals perished in great numbers. Hannibal, however, pressed forward with indomitable energy. He had placed all his fortunes on this cast of the die, and he was still animated with the assurance that, once arrived on the Italian champain, all his trials would be recompensed by the accession to his side of the whole force of Italy. He overcame the vexatious resistance of the Allobroges among the defiles of the mountains, and forced his way over ice and through snow across the slippery summit of the pass. Strange stories were told of his blasting the rocks with fire and vinegar. We cannot tell out of what misconceived incident they may have been framed; but we may perhaps read in them the aptness of the Roman imagination to connect the making of roads with the conduct of a military

expedition. The Carthaginians were supposed to have cut their way across the Alps with the sword in the one hand and the spade in the other. But when they descended at last into the smiling valleys of the Cisalpine through the territory of the Salassi the numbers of their mighty armaments were reduced to 20,000 foot and 6,000 horse, with a pitiful array of seven elephants.

Hannibal had conquered his difficulties, but now commenced his disappointments. The promises of the Boians were utterly falsified. No allies offered themselves, no auxiliaries joined themselves to his slender ranks. It was only by taking part with the Insubrians against their neighbours and enemies the Taurini that he was able to obtain guidance and supplies. The Romans had now collected in force on the banks of the Po, and the Gauls, rendered wary by their many disasters, determined to await the issue of the first encounter before declaring for either party. The Romans were now indeed roused to a sense of their danger, and evinced their accustomed alacrity. While Scipio was making good his return from the Transalpine they recalled Sempronius from his enterprise against Carthage. The bulk, indeed, of Scipio's army was still sent on to Spain, to intercept, we may suppose, supplies from thence to Hannibal, but the consul himself took ship with the rest of his forces for Pisa, as the quickest way of wheeling round to the front of the foe who had retreated before him, and there assumed the command of the levies brought him by the prætor. The Carthaginians, however, had already obtained the short repose they needed, and eager for the conflict now, as they were before disposed to avoid it, they advanced almost to the Ticinus, on the left bank of the Po, when at last they met the van of the Roman army which was preparing to oppose them.

At this juncture a victory was of the first necessity for the daring invader. Without a victory he could get no allies, and without allies he was lost. Again strange stories were told of the means by which he sought at this crisis to animate his men to the highest pitch of resolution. He brought before them a company of prisoners, torn with stripes, galled with chains, half-famished with hunger. To these he offered arms and vestments and gaudy trappings, and bade them combat with one another for the spoil. The poor wretches sprang with fury one at another. 'Such,' said Hannibal to his soldiers, 'is your case also. You, too, are in the uttermost straits, but below there is a rich prize for you. Show then the same courage as these miserable barbarians and win the goods which fortune brings

you.' The affair of the Ticinus was but a skirmish, but the advantage clearly rested with the invaders, and when Scipio was constrained to retire behind the Po, Hannibal secured the advantages of a great victory. Two thousand Gauls at once passed over from the Roman camp to the Carthaginian. The champion of Africa seemed at one blow to have justified his audacious enterprise.

Scipio had broken down the bridge over the Ticinus, and made shift to establish himself in the new colony of Placentia. Hannibal, unable to overtake him, retraced his steps some way up the bank of the Po, till he found a proper spot for effecting the passage. The Gauls now received him with complacency, and he found himself on the second day after the battle in front of the main army of the Romans. But the Romans were strongly posted, their communications were well maintained, and their supplies abundant, while they awaited the arrival of the legions of Sempronius, which, from fear of the storms of winter or of the naval force of the Carthaginians, were required to make their march by land from Lilybæum to Messana, and again from Rhegium to the Po. The courage of the Romans now revived. They quitted their fortifications and took up a position on the left bank of the Trebia, while the invader, though reinforced by Gaulish auxiliaries, began to feel straitened in his means of maintaining himself. The forces on either side might be now about equal, and amounted probably to 40,000 men. Hannibal was eager for a pitched battle. Scipio had been wounded, and was not yet able to resume his command, and Sempronius longed for the opportunity of distinguishing himself. The combat was not long delayed. It was decided by the superior tactics of Hannibal, who posted his brother Mago with a chosen band in ambush, and threw the Romans into confusion by a timely onset on their rear. Their main body made good its retreat into Placentia, but great numbers were cut off from it and destroyed on the banks of the Trebia, the little stream which gave a name to the famous battle of the day.

The legions escaped eventually in two directions, those under Scipio retiring upon Ariminum and the upper coast, the forces of Sempronius crossing the Apennines into Etruria. The Cisalpine was entirely abandoned, and fell into the hands of the invader; but the burden of supporting him was great, and the Gauls seem to have given him little assistance, and even harassed him with fears for his life. It was reported that he was obliged to consult his safety by constantly assuming different disguises even within his own camp.

Early in the year 217 Hannibal led his army across the Apennines to the valley of the lower Arno, where it suffered much from the wetness of the soil, and where he himself lost an eye from fatigue and sickness. The Romans meanwhile had hardly recovered from the blow he had given them. While they still insisted on keeping a large force on foot in Spain, they placed two armies under the command of the consuls, of whom one kept close within his quarters at Ariminum, the other at Arretium, and neither ventured forth to meet the invader. Of these the first was Cn. Servilius, a favoured leader of the Senate, but of no great military reputation; the second was the valiant C. Flaminius, in whom the people entirely trusted, but whose election was unpalatable to the nobles. He had recently carried a measure forbidding the senators to own a vessel of more than a prescribed light burden, which they resented as a limitation of their means of making money by trade. They now announced many sinister omens, which if he had shown himself in the city would have caused his detention; but he avoided the snare and hastened to his legions without assuming the military robe in the Capitol, or performing the stated sacrifice on the Alban mount. The senators augured ill of a command thus irregularly undertaken, and their presentiments were, as it happened, lamentably fulfilled. Hannibal made many attempts to entice Flaminius and Servilius into an engagement, but without success, till he determined to leave his strongholds behind and plunge boldly into the heart of Italy, where the rich plateau of the middle Tiber would furnish his restless soldiers with supplies and booty. He carried on the war, whenever not restrained by views of policy, with unrelenting barbarity, destroying everything with fire and sword, and performing to the letter a vow he had made to give no quarter to a Roman.

Flaminius was aroused at last to follow him. It was by the waters of the lake Trasimenus that he came up with the terrible marauders. It may be a question whether he was outwitted by the genius of Hannibal or betrayed into a snare by the occurrence of fog at the critical moment. The scene of the battle which ensued is elaborately described by Livy; but unfortunately the fog seems to have bewildered the historian as well as the consul, for modern inquirers find it impossible to recognise the spot from his description. His account has been further criticised from the statement he ventures to make that an earthquake actually occurred and was not perceived by the combatants in the heat of the engagement. The Romans, however, were entrapped in a defile, from which their advanced troops

U.C. 537.
B.C. 217.

released themselves with severe loss and escaped into a neighbouring village, but the main body was cut to pieces, the consul slain on the field, the captives massacred without mercy. Even the fugitives could not long defend themselves, and such of them as were Romans seem to have shared the common fate, but their auxiliaries were treated with consideration, and dismissed to their homes to announce the generosity as well as the valour of their promised deliverer.

When the news of the disaster reached Rome the Senate, which had made light of their losses at the Ticinus and the Trebia, could no longer disguise the crisis which had arrived. One consul was slain, the other was crouching behind the walls of Ariminum, two hundred miles away, with a broken and dispirited army, and the victor of Trasimenus was between him and Rome. The prætor Pomponius convened the people and announced the loss of a great battle. The city was deeply agitated, as a sea stirred by the winds, says the historian: but the Senate deliberated with gravity, and decided to appoint a dictator for the preservation of the state. Their choice fell upon Q. Fabius Maximus, the chief of the party of the nobles, but they allowed him to name as the master of the horse Minucius Rufus, a favourite with the people. Prayers and sacrifices followed; a sacred spring, or dedication of the animals born during the first month, was declared; the gods were entertained at a Lectisternium, or solemn banquet laid before their images. Meanwhile an army of four legions was speedily enrolled, and Fabius led it in quest of Hannibal wherever he might be found. For Hannibal, instead of descending straight upon the city, as the Gauls had done in their day of triumph before him, had marched off into the country of the Samnites, and was to be heard of far away among the Greek cities of Apulia. It appears that he was as much disappointed of aid from the Etruscans as from the Gauls. His new allies were only anxious to be quit of their hungry and rapacious defenders. His sturdy Spanish infantry and his light Numidian horse were utterly powerless to conduct the siege of a great fortified city such as Rome, and the legions of Servilius, at his back, might at any time recover their courage and fall unexpectedly upon him. Hannibal was actually in no less a strait than the Romans whom he had thrice defeated. He seems to have despaired of more effectual aid from the Samnites and Pelignians. Another resource remained for him, and he now sought to stir up the discontent of the Greek population of southern Italy. But even among them he found himself an object of fear and hatred. In spite

of all his efforts to conciliate them they were still' disposed to regard him, with his Gaulish auxiliaries, as no better than a Gaul himself, as a barbarian who massacred his captives and fed his soldiers on their flesh. Even the Greeks felt that blood, as it is said, is thicker than water, and were more drawn to the Romans, an offshoot of their own Pelasgian stock, than to the alien race of Tyre and Carthage. Accordingly they too made their vows for the defeat of the Carthaginians, and the people of Neapolis and Pæstum stripped the gold from their temples as an offering to the necessities of the Senate. Hiero of Syracuse remained faithful as ever to his alliance, and sent money and stores of all kinds to the utmost of his power. Once more Hannibal had made a terrible miscalculation.

Fabius saw all this, and took his measures accordingly. His policy was delay, and he obtained therefrom his illustrious sobriquet of *Cunctator*. His tactics were to throw garrisons into the strong places, to carry off the supplies of all the country round the enemy's camp wherever he should pitch it, to harass him by constant movement, but to refuse an engagement. The ravages which Hannibal committed were indeed hard to be borne, and it required firmness and prudence on the part of the dictator, such as few men could have maintained, to persist in his course. When at last Hannibal threw himself into the very garden of Campania, the valley of the Volturnus, Fabius began to close upon him, and seemed to have caught him in a trap. Then it was that Hannibal showed the superiority of his military genius, distracting the enemy's attention by the famous stratagem of the cattle which he drove at night among the hills with blazing torches on their horns, thus evading his blockade and extricating himself from their toils. The Romans, mortified at this escape, now murmured against the system of delay as after all fruitless, and the spirit of restlessness and rashness was again rife, both among the people and in the army.

The courage of the Romans was, indeed, maintained by news they continued to receive of success in various distant quarters. In Spain many tribes and cities turned to their side. Carthage herself seemed to have forgotten her general in his difficulties, and the few vessels she sent from time to time to communicate with him were generally chased back to their own coasts by the greater number or the greater activity of the Romans. Their allies at a distance bestirred themselves in their behalf. They ventured to direct the prætor Cæcilius to make a descent upon Africa itself. The eyes of Rome

were everywhere, and it was only in the heart of Italy that they were greeted with no tokens of success.

The brief dictatorship of the Cunctator expired all too soon. Fabius was to be replaced by two consuls. The one was the nominee of the Senate, Paulus Æmilius, who was himself well-disposed to follow the policy of his predecessor in command, nor did the prudence of his party refuse to sanction it; but Terentius Varro, who represented the blind impatience of the people, soon took advantage of the powers entrusted to him to precipitate a general battle. The two consuls were placed together at the head of a double army, in which the chief strength of the republic was collected together; and the command of this immense force of 80,000 foot, and 6,000 horse was held on alternate days by each. Never was the jealousy of the imperium which so prevailed in the breasts of the Romish people productive of such fatal consequences. They disagreed, and paralyzed each other's action, Varro constantly threatening and Paulus as regularly declining to give battle to Hannibal, whom they had now followed to the field which he had himself chosen at Cannæ, on the borders of Apulia. He occupied a broad plain, favourable for the use of his Numidian cavalry, in which arm he far excelled the Romans; and he contrived to send a detachment of these into the midst of the enemy under pretence of going over to their side, counting upon them for an attack on the Roman rear during the heat of the combat. It was the day of Varro's command. The Roman force was double the Carthaginian in number. In the blindness of his confidence Varro concentrated this force to a column of great depth, neglecting to surround the inferior force of the enemy by extending his line. Hannibal, on the contrary, surrounded Varro. He allowed him to penetrate to his centre, and then enveloped his entangled and serried ranks with clouds of horse and light-armed infantry. The battle resulted in the entire defeat of the Romans, and the carnage was immense, for from the Numidian horse there was little chance of escape. The Roman annalists themselves declared that 45,000 of the Romans and auxiliaries were lost, and enumerated among them the consul Paulus, U.C. 538. Minucius the late master of the horse, twenty-one tri-
B.C. 216. bunes, eighty senators, and innumerable knights. Polybius, our Greek authority, pretends that the loss amounted to 70,000.

Rome had received many terrible blows in this campaign, but the slaughter of Cannæ was the most disastrous of all. To raise

and equip the legions which had now perished had required desperate exertions, and her resources both of men and of money might well seem exhausted. Nevertheless her courage did not fail her, and fortune had not altogether deserted her. Hannibal had been willing to sacrifice four thousand of his Gaulish auxiliaries for one thousand of his own faithful Carthaginians, but it may be questioned if his calculation was a wise one. The Gauls and other allies from Italy were less than ever disposed to hazard their lives in a cause which they felt to be not their own. Now when one of his officers urged him to make the most of his victory, and promised to bring his troops in five days to the very gates of Rome, he knew too well the delays and perils that would intervene, and that the associates he had painfully gathered round him would insist upon lingering on the way to kill and burn and amass plunder. Cannæ was two hundred miles distant from Rome, and the route lay across many mountains and rivers, and was bordered by Roman colonies and garrisons. Even if arrived before the walls he might ask himself, what profit would it be to him? Rome was not now to be taken by surprise, as in the time of Brennus. He resigned himself to the task, disheartening as he must have found it, of stirring up the dissatisfaction of the Greeks, the Campanians, and the various populations of southern Italy, while awaiting assistance from Carthage, and gradually providing the means required for laying siege to the city of 'the seven castles.'

The accounts we have received of the defection of these unstable subjects from their mistress are tinctured, even at the distance of two centuries, by the alarm which actually pervaded Rome at this moment. Livy enumerates a long list of them: the Atellani, the Hirpini, the Apulians in part, the Samnites generally, the Bruttians altogether, the Lucanians, together with the Greek communities, almost without exception. But as we read further we discover how marked is the correction to be applied to this statement, and how many and how important are the cities which after all proved themselves faithful. It is probable that Hannibal received some supplies and still more promises from the open country throughout the regions which he traversed; but few only of the fortified places opened their gates to him, and he became constantly engaged for the years that followed in the task of subduing their resistance and strengthening himself in the positions which he had gained. The Romans were surprised to find themselves relieved from the peril which seemed immediately to threaten them.

They decreed new levies with their habitual pertinacity; required for the legions the services of the proletarians whom they had before confined to the fleet; allowed the enlistment of debtors, criminals, even of slaves; and invited contributions in money from every man of property among them. The enrolment of fresh legions was in active progress when the surviving consul, the author of their disaster, returned in dejection to the city; but instead of disgracing or even upbraiding him, the Senate went forth in a body to meet him, and voted him their thanks 'for not having despaired of the republic.' They entrusted him again with a command, and sent him back at the head of a consular army to the very country which had been the scene of his discomfiture.

CHAPTER XXI.

Continuation of the Second Punic war—Operations of the Romans in Spain and Sicily—Reduction of Syracuse by Marcellus—Dissipation of Hannibal's army at Capua—He makes himself master of Tarentum and shows himself before Rome—The Romans conquer at Capua and Tarentum, and cruelly chastise them—Hasdrubal reaches Italy, but is defeated and slain at Metaurus—P. Scipio carries the war into Africa—Hannibal is recalled and defeated at Zama—Carthage submits to an ignominious peace.—(B.C. 216–201.)

THE memorable battle of Cannæ was fought at the beginning of August, in the year 216. No movements of importance took place on either side for the remainder of the year. Hannibal, who was evidently in want of money, allowed his prisoners to send ten of their number to negotiate for the ransom of the whole body; but the Senate refused to listen to the proposals, declaring that Rome had no pity for her children who had suffered themselves to fall alive into the hands of an enemy. The Carthaginian, disappointed of his prize-money, either sold the captives as slaves or compelled them to fight with one another. Such at least was the story told by the Romans themselves, who strove in every way to blacken the character of the man who had so signally worsted them; while they pretended that the generous captives, their own brave but luckless brethren, persisted, even under cruel torments, in refusing to do his bidding.

Meanwhile, the great contest between Rome and Carthage had been carried on in other quarters besides the central stage on which

our regards have been lately fixed. The Romans had adopted the bold policy of dispersing their forces, even while the chief seat of their power was threatened. They harassed the enemy in various directions, perhaps in order to prevent him from sending succour to the daring chief whom he had lodged at the very threshold of Rome itself. They were aware no doubt that at Carthage there was great division of political sentiment. The party of Hanno and the Senate retained its jealousy of the Barcine or popular faction, and was ill-disposed to make great exertions for the relief of the son of Hamilcar. The wealthy traders used all their influence to protect their commercial interests on every coast of the Mediterranean rather than expend blood and treasure on a rash adventure in the heart of Italy. The spirit of Carthage and the spirit of Rome were unequally matched at this decisive crisis. We may believe that the legions which seemed to be wasted on the shores of Spain did really good service to the cause of their afflicted country. Carthage cared more for her Iberian gold-mines than for any number of fruitless victories on the barren soil of Italy. But in Spain the arms of Rome under the command of the Scipios were notably successful. They began with driving the Carthaginians again across the Ebro, and recovered the fortresses which had been taken from the unfortunate Saguntines. The struggle, however, continued for several years, and great exertions were made on both sides for obtaining the mastery in a region so abundant in men and in gold. In the year 212 U.C. 542.
B.C. 212. the two Scipios suffered a defeat, and were both slain. But in the year following the young P. Cornelius Scipio was sent into Spain to recover the fortunes of the republic, and he succeeded five years later in overthrowing the power of Carthage throughout the peninsula, and driving the bulk of her forces back to Africa.

Nor was the fortune of Rome less conspicuous in the island in which she had so often contended before. In Sicily, while the old king Hiero, the faithful ally of the Romans, was still living, his son Gelo made an attempt to throw his capital, Syracuse, into the arms of Carthage. He was checked, however, and died soon after; but on the decease of Hiero himself the defection of the Greek city was not long delayed; and the Carthaginians, congratulating themselves on the diversion this must create in their favour, did not hesitate to stop the succours which Mago was about to lead to his brother Hannibal, and sent them to Sardinia instead. Thus supported, the Sardinians rose against Rome; and at the same time Philippos, king of Macedonia, promised to transport a large fleet and army to

assist the invader in Italy. But all these efforts and threats were disconcerted. The prætor Manlius destroyed the army which the Carthaginians had landed in Sardinia; the preparations of Philippus were tardy, his ambassadors were intercepted on their way and carried off to Rome, and before he could launch his armaments the Romans had themselves thrown a force upon his coasts, which effectually baffled his movements. Marcellus, now for the third time consul, was commissioned to reduce Syracuse, which he effected

U.C. 542.

B.C. 212.

after an obstinate defence, rendered memorable by the mechanical inventions contributed to it by the genius of the great geometer Archimedes.

From this brief sketch of more distant operations we may return to the campaigns of Hannibal, which, though less brilliant and animated than hitherto, continue still to furnish the chief interest of the Second Punic war. The winter which followed upon the victory of Cannæ was indeed the turning-point in the hero's career. He had been expelled, as we have seen, from the plains of Campania by the tactics of Fabius; but after his recent success no further resistance could be made, and he chose Capua, which had offered to open its gates, for his winter-quarters. Here it was that his hardy veterans broke at last through all restraints of discipline, and surrendered themselves to the fascinations of a balmy climate and a luxury unknown to the children either of Rome or of Carthage. To these attractions Hannibal seems himself to have succumbed. He might rest secure for the present from all assaults on the side of the Romans, and abide the arrival of his brother Mago from Africa, or Hasdrubal from Spain, while he expected the adhesion of all the cities of Magna Græcia. When he found, however, that the succours were indefinitely retarded, and that the favour of the Greek population was by no means so fully bestowed upon him as he had anticipated, he roused himself from his fatal repose, and set about the reduction of the numerous strong places which still held out in his immediate vicinity and continued to harass and imperil him. In these attempts he met with many reverses. He failed before Cumæ, which was defended by Sempronius Gracchus, the first of a name famous in Roman history; he was twice repulsed before Nola, and suffered in a single engagement the heavy loss of five thousand men out of his slender army. At the same time Fabius passed the Vulturnus, and, assuming the offensive, captured three places in the neighbourhood of Capua; Sempronius Longus gained a victory over the Carthaginian lieutenant Hanno at Grumentum, and drove his

division out of Lucania into Bruttium; Valerius reconquered the rebellious cities of the Hirpini; and Marcellus, springing forth from Nola, completed the reduction of the invader's allies in Samnium. The defection of a large body of Spanish foot and Numidian horse from Hannibal in the course of these operations U.C. 540.
B.C. 214. may be attributed, perhaps, to the demoralization produced by their debauches at Capua.

Abandoned by his countrymen and ill-seconded by those who professed to be his friends, Hannibal was still capable of performing wonders in maintaining himself in the position he had deliberately chosen. In the year 212, the same which witnessed the conquest of Syracuse by Marcellus, he balanced this misfortune by making himself master of Tarentum. U.C. 542. From thence he again burst away northward; and the chief forces of Rome being occupied with the siege of Capua, he ventured to leave the enemy on his flank, and actually showed himself before the walls of Rome. The citizens closed the gates and determined on a vigorous defence, well aware that they had powerful armies within call, and ready to fly to their deliverance. A portion, but a portion only, of the force before Capua was despatched for the relief of the capital. Roman constancy would not, even at such a juncture, suffer the siege of a great rival, once undertaken, to be baffled and abandoned. The finest passage, perhaps the only fine passage, in the long epic of Silius Italicus describes the dismay of the Carthaginian when, arrived in sight of the detested city, he beheld the gods of Rome arrayed, each on his own peculiar hill, in defence of their beloved city. But it was rather the approach of one-half of the besiegers of Capua, with the assurance that as many more were left behind to impede and harass his retreat, that induced the rash assailant to retrace his steps. His appearance before Rome was a mere bravado. He must have been wholly unprovided with means for the regular siege of so great and strong a city. But his retreat was an augury of further misfortune. Capua soon fell under the stedfast operations of the beleaguering force, and Fabius and Fulvius, the consuls, proceeded in cold blood to make a terrible example of a place which, once conquered, spared, indulged, and cherished, had dared to revolt against the republic. Capua, the chief city of Magna Græcia, had boasted herself as a rival of Rome. Her walls were five or six miles in circumference, and she had occupied in more recent times the eminence enjoyed at an earlier period by Sybaris or Crotona. Capua was the home of all the highest art and luxury of Greece, at a time

when the charms of Greek civilization flourished more brilliantly in her colonies than at her own native home. But the Greeks of Capua had none of the qualities that should have emboldened them to defy the martial mistress of Italy, and when the support of Hannibal was for a moment withdrawn they could offer no effectual resistance to the fury they had provoked. Signal was the chastisement that alighted upon a mark so conspicuous. Seventy of her senators fell under the rods and axes of the lictors; three hundred men of birth and rank were thrown into chains; the whole people were sold as slaves. The city and its territory were declared to be Roman property, and the place was eventually repopled by a swarm of Roman occupants, to retain for ages in the paltry condition of an Italian country-town the bare tradition of its old Hellenic cultivation. Thus degraded and vulgarized Capua still enjoyed a certain repute in the imagination of the Romans, as the fair Circe whose charms had enervated the host of Hannibal.

The conquest of Capua was effected in the year 211, and was speedily followed by other successes. The same year was signalized

U.C. 543.

by the treaty made between the Roman prætor Valerius Lævinus and the Ætolian Scopas, by which the Ætolian people were secured against the aggressions of Philip of Macedonia, and Rome obtained a basis for her future aggressions on the eastern side of the Adriatic. In the same year Marcellus celebrated a triumph on the Alban mount, and poured into Rome the plunder of Syracuse. The year following Lævinus, now consul, reduced Agrigentum, and Scipio the New Carthage. Rome contracted an alliance with Syphax, king of the Massæsylians, a tribe on the western side of Numidia, who was glad to be supported in his constant hostilities with Carthage. She renewed terms of friendship

U.C. 545.

with Ptolemy the Egyptian, from whom also important services might be anticipated. The year 209 was marked by the capture of Tarentum, towards which city the Romans felt the deepest animosity, and which they punished by selling 30,000 of its people into slavery. A decree of the Senate, ratified by the vote of the commons, made a general assignment of the Campanian territory for the occupation of the Roman citizens.

Meanwhile Hannibal had been employing with energy all the means at his disposal to support the unfortunate nations which had ventured to cast in their fortunes with his own. But in no case had his genius availed to save them, while the successes sometimes gained for him in Spain had failed to maintain there the power of Carthage,

and the alliance he had arranged with the Macedonians had brought him no substantial aid from the opposite quarter. A last effort was made for his relief when his brother Hasdrubal decided to leave Spain to its fate, while he transported all the forces he could command out of that country into Italy. Fabius had gained a victory over him at Bæcula, in the valley of the upper Bætis, but a gleam of success had been shed upon Hannibal's arms in Apulia, where he had surprised Marcellus, for the fifth time consul, and slain him in an ambush. Hasdrubal now shrank away from the attacks of the Romans and directed his force by a long and circuitous march, so as to evade their pursuit and secure himself from obstruction. While Scipio watched the usual road from the Ebro into Gaul along the coast of the Mediterranean, he threw himself into the hilly tracts to the westward, crossed the Bidassoa and the Adour, and so reached the Rhone through the mountain passes of the Cevennes. From the confluence of the Rhone and the Saone, the site of the later foundation of Lugdunum, he effected his passage of the Alps, and as we must suppose by the Little St Bernard, the same route that Hannibal had taken before him. His march was no doubt in the early summer, for at the time of the election of consuls in the spring there was only a rumour yet heard of his approaching the Alps; and this may account perhaps for the facility with which he would seem to have made the arduous transit. He was supported, however, by an auxiliary body of Arvernian Gauls, and his passage met apparently with no opposition from the natives. He descended into Italy with a fresh and powerful army, and the Roman generals were obliged to retire before him as he crossed the great plain of the Cisalpine, and took the line of the upper coast in his efforts to make a junction with Hannibal in the south.

The Romans had exerted themselves to the utmost to meet the danger that had for some months threatened them. They had chosen for their consuls the bravest of the chiefs that now remained to them after the loss of Marcellus, and the decay of the powers both of Fabius and of Fulvius by increasing years. Lævinus had given offence to the ruling party in the Senate, and seems to have been passed over in consequence. The choice of a candidate from among the patricians fell upon C. Claudius Nero, while the plebeians were represented by M. Livius, names of high repute at Rome in many later generations, but now for the first time brought conspicuously to light. To Nero was entrusted the task of keeping Hannibal in check in Bruttium, while Livius was charged with the

duty of resisting the advance of the new invader. But to this, as we have seen, his strength proved unequal. Hasdrubal still drew on, leaving the garrison of Placentia behind him, crossed the Rubicon, made an easy prey of Ariminum, found the line of the Metaurus still undefended, and only paused when he came in front of the camp of Livius before the walls of Sena. From this position he sent horsemen to inform Hannibal of his arrival, and to apprise him of the line he was taking along the upper coast. Hannibal meanwhile was engaging in various indecisive actions with Nero, in which, indeed, he is said to have lost many thousands of his army, which could ill spare them; but he did not expect his brother's arrival so early, and moreover he could not know beforehand whether he was about to force a passage through Umbria and Picenum, or to cross the Apennines and rouse the Etruscans to arms, as he had already roused the Gauls. Such at least seems the only explanation that can be given of his fatal inactivity. Hasdrubal's emissaries had got far into Apulia before they fell into the hands of Nero, and the letters they bore betrayed to the Roman general the plans of which he was himself as ignorant as Hannibal. Possessed of this important information, he made a feint to deceive his opponent, quitted his camp with a portion of his forces, and pushed northward with the utmost speed and resolution. When he fell in with Livius, still apprehensive that Hannibal might be closely following, he urged his colleague to an instant attack. But Hasdrubal sagaciously discovered the reinforcements which had been added to the troops before him, and promptly retraced his steps as far as the Metaurus. There, however, he was brought to bay by powers considerably superior to his own; and while the combat was still undecided he was surprised

U.C. 547. by the flank attack of Nero, his army was totally routed,
B.C. 207. and he himself disdaining to fly was slain in the medley.

Almost as rapidly as he had marched northward did Nero now hasten in the opposite direction. He announced the defeat to Hannibal by throwing his brother's head into his lines. The Carthaginian must have felt that he had now lost his last chance of maintaining himself in Italy. Yet he obstinately held his ground at the extremity of the peninsula, and though venturing on no active movements himself, occupied for the ensuing year the armies of both consuls to whom Bruttium was assigned as their common province. But the victors of the Metaurus were first recalled to Rome, where the people, fully sensible both of its late peril and its sudden relief, broke out in unbounded rejoicings. They were invited to

celebrate a triumph, a solemnity which had been formerly repeated almost every year, but in which the republic had not ventured to indulge while a formidable enemy was still present on Italian soil.

The new consuls Q. Cæcilius Metellus and L. Veturius Philo continued on their part to carry out the 'Fabian policy' of delay, and made no attempt to rouse the weary and dispirited hero to fury. In Italy the war languished. Elsewhere events were still working in favour of the Romans. The withdrawal of the power of their forces from Spain had reduced the strength of the Carthaginians in that country to the lowest ebb. They were in face of the best general the Romans had ever had; they depended for support upon the favour of the Iberians, a fickle people, ever ready to side with the strongest; and yet they had cast the fortunes of Hasdrubal and Carthage upon the turn of a die. They had lost, and henceforth they were without resource. In the year 206 they relinquished the field to Scipio, leaving only the city of Gades ^{U.C. 548.} in the keeping of Mago, another brother of Hannibal, and Scipio at once made preparations for carrying the war into Africa. With this view he confirmed the compact already made with the Numidian Syphax, and entered into further relations with the Mauritanian Massinissa. It was not easy, however, to induce the Roman Senate to sanction so bold a step as the invasion of Africa while Hannibal still lingered in Italy. They appointed Scipio consul for the year 205, but assigned him Sicily for his province, and ^{U.C. 549.} prudently effected a peace with their enemies in Macedonia before they committed themselves to the venture to which their champion was impelling them.

The renown of this national hero derives peculiar lustre from sources which we are unable distinctly to trace. The account of his exploits by Livy seems to betray in its romantic and poetical character the colouring, if not the invention, of the panegyrists who hung about the families of the Roman magnates. Scipio was himself one of the first of his nation to devote himself to Greek manners, and surround himself with Greek admirers and flatterers. His manners were refined beyond the usual tone of his rough countrymen. He was popular at Rome, but he was far more popular among the allies of Rome, and was adored by the Italians as their great protector against the Carthaginian invader. When the Senate, in its jealousy of his transcendent abilities—such, at least, was the story current—refused to allow him the men and money requisite for his meditated descent upon Africa, it was from the states of Italy that he recruited

his forces, each furnishing him with a portion of the material he required, and urging him to abandon the Fabian policy, which, however it had answered the interests of Rome herself, had caused prolonged misery to every part of the peninsula. It was this popularity that gave rise to the assertion repeated by many of the later writers, that wherever he set his foot Scipio might have established himself as a king. Undoubtedly his gallantry and genius gained him the peculiar veneration of his countrymen, and pointed him out for an epic hero to be adored like Romulus, to be loved like Camillus. His continence is justly noted by Polybius in a simple story which Livy has magnified into a romance. No other Roman except Julius Cæsar ever won and retained such a hold upon the imagination of the Romans.

The Senate, it has been said, was just at this crisis relieved from expense and anxiety by the pacification of Greece. A few words must be given to the conduct of affairs in that quarter during the period of Hannibal's invasion. The interference of Rome with Illyria brought her into contact with the Macedonians, who bordered upon that region to the east. Demetrius of Pharos, whom the Romans had expelled from his conquests on the western coast, betook himself to the court of Philippos, king of Macedon, and urged him to rise against them. Philippos, in the north, and the Achæan league, or federation of states, in the south of Greece, had united in what was called the Social War, against the Ætolians. During the truce which was kept for the celebration of the Nemean games envoys from Hannibal introduced themselves to Philippos, just after the victory of Trasimenus, and Demetrius was able to engage him to make terms with the Carthaginians and assume the part, so long coveted by the chief Grecian leaders, of defender of Greece against the Romans. The republic in this strait exerted the diplomatic astuteness which marked its career no less signally than its conduct in war. It first made a treaty with the Ætolians, by which it secured to that race of lawless brigands the possession of every Greek town they could seize, bargaining for the slaves, money, and other plunder as its own share of the spoil. It thus supplied itself with the materials of war while it left to its allies all the difficulties of the enterprise. At the same time it engaged in alliance with nations still further eastward, and contrived to keep Philippos in constant occupation with the arms of Attalus of Pergamus in Asia Minor, of Antiochus of Syria, and of the barbarous tribes of Illyria and Dardania on his northern frontier. The aid he had promised to

Hannibal was now deferred from year to year, and in fact never arrived. It was not, however, till after the victory of the Metaurus that the Macedonians finally abandoned him, and entered into bonds of amity with the successful republic.

Scipio had overcome the resistance of the Senate by threatening it with an appeal to the people, in order to obtain permission to carry the war into Africa. He had been content, with this grand object in view, to forego the honours of a triumph, which party jealousy denied him, but which no doubt he could have extorted, with the popular feeling rising so high at his back. But in Africa his career was for a moment checked. The perfidious Syphax had gone over to the Carthaginians, seduced, as was reported, by the persuasions of Sophonisba, daughter of one of their chiefs, of whom he was enamoured. Such female influence was unknown to the earlier ages of the stern Roman republic, and was now marked and recorded with contempt or indignation. But if Massinissa was faithful to Rome, it was not to be expected that his jealous neighbour would make common cause with him. It was evident that a long contest yet lay before the Romans, and Scipio devoted himself to the task with constancy and resolution. Even at this crisis of her fate Carthage, it seems, had allowed Mago to betake himself from Gades, which he could no longer hold, to the shores of Italy, in the hope of bringing timely succour to Hannibal. He carried off with him all the plunder of the commercial capital of Spain to furnish the sinews of war, and made for the Ligurian coast, with the view of securing once more the assistance of the Insubrians and other Gaulish tribes. He was checked, however, if not routed, by a Roman army of four legions, and the wound he himself received disabled him from further movement. He was now recalled at the pressing instance of the Carthaginian Senate, which also commanded Hannibal to quit Italy without delay and make all diligence to come and save his country at home.

Meanwhile Scipio, having landed in Africa in the year 204, began his operations by laying siege to Utica. There appears to have been no disposition on the part either of the nation or of their mercenary soldiers to revolt against the Carthaginian government. Scipio found no ally except Massinissa, and he was a fugitive with only a few hundred horsemen, having been expelled from his own realm by Syphax. His knowledge of the country and of the people may have been valuable, and it was by his counsel perhaps that Scipio set fire to the huts of the Numidians

U.C. 550.

and Carthaginians, constructed of the lightest materials, successively on the same day. The effect of this stroke seems to have been prodigious. The armies of the enemy were thrown into utter confusion, and routed with immense slaughter. Massinissa followed up the blow by the capture of Syphax, which neutralized at once the alliance of Numidia. But Scipio sustained a reverse in the loss of his fleet, and the Uticans continued to defend themselves, and compelled him at last to raise the siege. For a moment at least he contemplated making terms with Carthage, and arranged an armistice while envoys were sent from Africa to Rome. But the Roman Senate, now exulting in the defeat of Mago, and the recall just announced of Hannibal from Italy, would listen to no accommodation. The envoys of Carthage returned without even a hearing. Hannibal reluctantly quitted the land in which he had waged war for so many years and gained such glorious victories to so little purpose; but on quitting it he suspended in the temple of Juno, on its extreme point, the Lacinian promontory, a number of brazen tablets inscribed with the principal events of the contest in the Greek and Punic languages. These records were seen by the historian Polybius, and may have served perhaps in some degree to correct the boastful figments of the Roman annalists. But too much of the conduct and the character of Hannibal must always remain veiled to us. The Romans persisted in depicting him as a monster of perfidy and cruelty, and undoubtedly his mode of making war was to the full as barbarous as that which generally prevailed at the time. The account of his massacring the Italian soldiers who refused to follow him into Africa is indeed frightful if true, but it hardly exceeded some of the acknowledged atrocities of the Romans themselves.

Hannibal sailed from Crotona in the autumn of 203, under cover of the armistice which had been concluded, and while it seemed still possible that a permanent peace might be established. The
u.c. 551. Romans were evidently glad to let him go and bear his laurels with him untarnished. He came to land, not at Carthage but at Leptis, and spent the winter at Hadrumetum. The greater part of another year intervened, and yet we hear nothing of warlike operations between the great generals who now confronted each other. At last a pitched battle was fought somewhere to the west of Carthage on the banks of the river Bagradas, to which the name of Zama has been attached, but which is supposed to have really occurred at two or three days' journey from that place. Nor is the

date of the battle definitely noted, which may however be aptly inferred from the circumstance recorded that it was fought on the day of an eclipse of the sun, such as is found to have taken place on the 19th October. This would be a small matter U.C. 552.
B.C. 202. but for the vast importance of the fortunes which were decided in that famous conflict. The disposition of Scipio's forces seems to have deviated in some particulars from that which was usual with the Romans; but the event was no doubt decided more by the indomitable valour of the legions when well led and confident in their commander, than by any superiority of the one chief over the other. It ended in the entire rout and destruction of the Carthaginian army, the flight of Hannibal, and the virtual conclusion of the long struggle between the rival republics. Scipio was at once advanced to the highest pinnacle of military glory, as the conqueror of the conqueror of Trasimenus and Cannæ.

There remained, however, a yet higher glory to achieve, and Scipio made it his own by his moderation and generosity. Carthage lay at last at the feet of Rome; there hardly wanted a second victory over the son of Syphax a few days later to reduce her to abject submission. The question now arose at Rome U.C. 553.
B.C. 201. and among the chiefs of the triumphant legions, how this detested and still dangerous enemy should be treated; many there were who vehemently urged her entire destruction, after the manner of Veii, or the treatment little less severe which had been inflicted on Capua and Tarentum. But Scipio alone withstood the clamour of his vengeful countrymen, partly, we may hope, from a feeling of humanity, partly, it has been surmised, from the liberal policy of not leaving Rome without a rival to teach her still to content herself by the law of nations, and refrain from the gratification of an inordinate ambition. He abstained from demanding the delivery of Hannibal into his hands, and allowed Carthage to retain her laws at home and her sway over the territories she claimed as her own in Africa. She was required to surrender all her ships but ten, all her elephants, and no doubt her other munitions of war, and to engage to make no war even in Africa without the permission of the Romans. Hannibal himself proved to his countrymen the necessity of submission. Having established Massinissa in dignity and power, as a vigilant outpost at the gates of Carthage, Scipio transported his army across the sea, traversed the southern half of the peninsula with an immense concourse of the people who had witnessed so many of his rival's victories, and entered Rome in the

most splendid of triumphs. Scipio received from the soldiers and citizens the illustrious name of Africanus, being the first Roman, if we except the dubious instance of Coriolanus, who was honoured with a titular designation from the place or people he had conquered. His statue was placed, in triumphal robes and crowned with laurel, in the temple of Jupiter. Voices were not wanting to declare that he was himself a genuine descendant of the Olympian deity. It is said, indeed, that the people were ready to offer him the consulship for life. In thus lavishing on their hero both divine and human honours they had advanced already very near to the temper of the Imperial epoch. As for Scipio himself, the offer, if really made, could not tempt him to abandon his usual moderation. But it seems, indeed, possible that at that crisis of the Roman polity a true patriot might have accepted the post of a constitutional sovereign, and done much to check the downward progress of public life, which became now marked and rapid. At least, at a later period, when the opportunity for any such prudent and temperate solution had passed away, Cicero takes a melancholy pleasure in representing another Scipio, the immediate descendant of the elder Africanus, as praising in a limited monarchy the best ideal of government. Had the nobles been left to work out the character they had justly inherited of loyal citizens and patriots, this is the consummation of their political career to which they might actually have been led; but their course, however temperate and prudent, was rudely intercepted by the torrent of national corruption which in less than another half-century broke down every moral barrier

CHAPTER XXII.

The good fortune of the Romans traced to the superiority of their character and the merits of their policy—Eagerness of the Italians to combat at their side—Rome confronted with Greece—State of the Grecian world after the breaking up of Alexander's empire—Feebleness of Athens, Thebes, and Sparta—The Achæan league; the Ætolians; the Macedonians.

THE fortune of war is proverbial, and every warlike people has passed perhaps more than once through a crisis when a slight and apparently casual turn of affairs might have changed its greatest successes into irreparable ruin. The Romans were devout believers in Fortune; there was no deity in their celestial hierarchy to whom they paid their vows more assiduously; they were apt to ascribe

to the special Fortune which they so constantly invoked their repeated preservation from imminent peril to their empire and nation. They were never tired of recurring to the happy chance by which, as they supposed, they were saved from destruction by the Etruscans under Porsena, by the Volscians under their own Caius Marcius, from the Gauls under Brennus, from the Samnites under Pontius, from the Greeks under Pyrrhus, and from the Carthaginians under Hannibal. It was mere affectation, indeed, to represent themselves as providentially saved at a later period from the craft of Jugurtha or Mithridates, or even from the impetuous assault of the Cimbri and Teutones. But their earlier enemies had been truly formidable, and of all the struggles for existence in which they were ever engaged there was none in which they came so near to ruin as in that with the great commander whom Scipio overthrew at Zama. It was a true instinct that made a late poet of the Empire select the war with Hannibal as the most critical epoch of Roman history. There was no doubt a moral reason for the successes of the Romans. The Romans owed their final triumphs over the Gauls, the Italians, and the Africans far more to their own merits than to any defect in their opponents. We may trace this superiority, first, to the strength and firmness of their character, which endued them with confidence in themselves, still more with confidence in one another; to the power of command over themselves and not less of command over others; to the mutual sympathy and brotherly feeling nurtured by the perils they had encountered and the triumphs they had won together, and to a consciousness of natural fitness to rule and an imperial destiny to accomplish. The vaunted patriotism of the Romans, which was undoubtedly both sincere and active, may be resolved into a sense of dependence upon one another and independence of all besides, which taught them to regard their city as the centre of their universe. To the last the genuine Roman never quitted Rome even for a few months without a wrench to his feelings; to be banished from Rome for years overwhelmed him with desolation. Death and exile he designated alike by the name of capital punishment.

It may well be believed that neither the Gauls, the Etruscans, nor the Carthaginians possessed the peculiar moral qualities which thus formed the basis of the Roman fortunes. The Gauls were semi-barbarians with no political instincts or common views; the Etruscans were slaves driven to the field of battle by an effete and debased aristocracy; the Carthaginians were eminently traders

and speculators, who made their public interests subservient to private ends, and were corrupted as a nation by personal selfishness. But besides these defects, none of these peoples had learnt the secret of Roman success in the adoption of the races they conquered, and the fusion of their own national life with that of the great mass of their subjects. Every colony of Roman citizens which was planted on the coasts or in the interior of Italy became a nucleus around which there rapidly grew a semi-Romanized population, eager to imitate the manners of Rome, and proud to accept from it the first rudiments of its national life. Every Latin colony, and next to these every Italian colony, receiving a certain foretaste of the full Roman franchise, was gradually prepared for admission to all the fulness of its privileges, and taught to regard itself as an inchoate member of the race which ruled throughout the peninsula. It was no blind chance that saved Rome from Pyrrhus or Hannibal, but this principle of assimilation, whencesoever derived, which baffled the calculations of both invaders, and rendered the Italian ally no less determined an opponent than the Roman himself.

We can trace, indeed, the way in which this principle worked in multiplying the arms of the Romans and supplying them with inexhaustible vigour. From the moment that the legions were converted from an annual conscription for a few months into a standing force, enrolled for permanent service, and quartered on every frontier of an ever-extending empire, the Gauls, the Etruscans, the Italians from all the conquered territories, threw themselves impetuously into their ranks, and rejoiced to exchange their provincial insignificance for the excitement of a military career under the Roman standards. The spirit of the Roman and the auxiliary was equally fed by the hopes of plunder and advancement. The sack of cities and the ravage of fields supplied them both with common stores of booty. The necessary expenses of the campaign were willingly defrayed by the contributions of the Italian colonies and cities. Rome had but to speak the word, and men and money were forthcoming in abundance, whether to lay hands on the opulence of Capua or Tarentum, or to make a raid upon the slave-producing barrenness of Illyria or Spain. For the Roman officers war had peculiar charms, for the honours of successful warfare formed the surest road to civil distinctions, and these too might be attained more indirectly but hardly less surely by the judicious distribution of the plunder acquired in the field among the voters in the forum at home. While the bravest and most generous of the citizens were retained

under their standards at a distance, the elective suffrage fell into the hands of the meaner class who were left in the city, and deemed unworthy of serving their country under arms. These were the men who in the comitia of the tribes and centuries almost openly sold the greater and the lesser offices of the state to the wealthiest candidates. The favour of these, the real dispensers of consulships and prætorships, was further solicited by shows and entertainments, and from the period we are now considering dates the general employment of the seductive arts by which the magnates of Rome gained for the most part and retained their ascendancy. Such were the gladiatorial combats, conducted with ever-increasing extravagance, and the distribution of the regular dole of food to every citizen who deigned to apply for it.

War, carried out on such principles and with such objects, could not fail to feed itself. Not the Romans only, but the Italians, and all the nations who could claim any share in the privileges of the Romans, were at all times clamorous for war; nor does the lavish expenditure of blood and treasure of the recent contest seem to have abated for a moment the military frenzy with which the whole armed population of the peninsula became possessed. The impulse thus given was utterly irresistible. No wisdom and foresight on the part of consuls or dictators could have arrested it, even if the eyes of the wisest of the Romans were actually opened to its fatal consequences. The withdrawal of these hardy races from the labours of the field was of course destructive to the ancient system of agriculture throughout Italy. The transformation of the husbandry of the peninsula from a vast aggregate of small holdings, each worked by its free owner and his family, into a handful of large properties, tended by slaves under the control of a hired bailiff, was effected, perhaps, in the course of the three generations that reached from the invasion of Pyrrhus to the dislodgment of Hannibal. In vain had the forms of the Roman constitution been steadily moulded in the direction of democracy. The circumstances of society had worked meanwhile much more effectually in the opposite direction. Rome had fallen more and more under the actual control of a small number of wealthy proprietors, who, partly by corruption and partly by force, made themselves masters of the state under the form of a liberal republic. The magnates of the Senate and the forum, who thus monopolized and divided among their own families the honours and offices of the state, and formed a class apart under the title of nobles, were still

for the most part animated with a spirit of patriotism, with a not unworthy pride in themselves, their ancestors, and their country. They still appealed to illustrious examples, and believed in the examples they appealed to. They were still, on the whole, a virtuous aristocracy, and we may believe that they were not themselves the dupes of the high-flown pretensions which the false sentiment of a later age so sedulously ascribed to them. But their virtue, such as it was, began already to tremble to its fall. The era which now opens upon us completed in the course of another half-century the demoralization of the Romans, and inflicted the most grievous sufferings upon the world around them.

‘And I too,’ says Livy fervently, as if he had been himself transported in spirit into the perils and hardships of the great struggle he had just related, ‘and I too rejoice to have reached the termination of the Punic war.’ He does not say ‘the second’ of the three wars between Rome and Carthage, which all lay within the compass of the work he had undertaken. The Second or Hannibalian war was felt on all hands to be the crisis of the international contest; still more, it was understood by the Romans themselves to constitute the most critical period of their entire history. ‘For the further I advance,’ he continues, ‘in the work which expands so widely before me, the more do I feel like one who has just dipped his foot in the water, and sees the mighty billows of the ocean increasing in depth and volume.’ The last sixty-three years of his history had occupied as much space as nearly five hundred that had gone before them; and, as the area of the Roman exploits extended, he might expect the labour of narrating them to be proportionally increased. Pyrrhus and Hannibal had been great, but beyond them lay the figures of Antiochus and Philippos, of Viriathus and Mithridates, of Juba and Jugurtha, and of all the illustrious Romans who should in turn oppose and vanquish them; beyond these again a Marius and a Sulla, a Pompeius, a Crassus and a Cæsar, an Antonius and an Octavius, any one of whom might comprise in his career the history of a whole generation of Romans. The theatre of the events which were now to be unfolded would reach from Gades to the Euphrates, from the shores of Britain to the Cataracts of the Nile. Rome had already stood for thirty years face to face with Hellas, Roman greed and ambition with Grecian cunning and refinement; but as long as Carthage stood erect the flank of the Roman empire remained uncovered, and it was not till the Carthaginians were swept from Italy, and

Hannibal himself reduced to impotence, that the conquerors of Zama and the Metaurus could seriously address themselves to the conquest of Hellenic civilization.

Even if we accept in full the statements we have received of the amount of life it cost to free Italy from the invader, it could not have effected any great reduction in the warlike resources of her population. The drain of Roman blood was repaired by the rapid admission of the subject races, and if the stoutest hands were constantly drafted into the ranks of the legions, the labours of the field might be transferred to captives made in war, or purchased with the spoils of conquest. The military force of the republic was as great as ever, and it was even more ardent for war, more devoted to arms as a trade or profession. The debts she had contracted in money were easily repaid by assignments of land. She continued to found colonies of her own people wherever the native population had been swept away or enfeebled. She drew into her own ports the commerce of Carthage and of the states with which Carthage had traded; and while the great inland sea was for the most part clear of pirates, particularly in its western waters, the commerce of the people that bordered it received an enormous impulse from the sudden pacification of the free highway between them.

The Greeks had watched the contest with anxious forebodings. They were well aware that whichever nation came off victorious, its greed of empire would not be satisfied with the undisputed possession of Spain or the islands, for which it pretended to contend. Rome had now not only abased Carthage, but had fixed an enemy at her side in the kings of Mauritania and Numidia, who would suffice to keep her ever distracted and ever feeble. The East was covered, so to say, with the ruins of the empire of Alexander. That mighty edifice had been hastily built up, and had not force and coherence enough to exist in any large masses for even one century. In Asia ten states, it is said, had been formed out of the provinces which had first been occupied by the Seleucides. In Thrace the native races had cast off the yoke of Macedonia, and placed themselves again under chiefs of their own blood. Egypt still remained as a separate kingdom, ruled by the Ptolemies with the swords of a handful of Greek mercenaries; but the fertile province of Cyrene had fallen away from it, and submitted itself to another Hellenic court with a slender Hellenic following. The continent, and the islands of Greece proper had very generally resumed their independence. They reverted almost to their primitive political

condition as an aggregate of numerous local tyrannies or republics, forming themselves occasionally into small circles of alliance, but ever jealous of one another, and ever preying upon one another, with no head to guide them, no principle to mould them into a corporate polity. Among these numerous independent atoms Sparta was still, perhaps, individually the strongest, and still preserved some tradition of its ancient military discipline; the Achæan league acquired some political prominence as a confederation of little states on both sides of the Gulf of Corinth; Athens and Thebes and other illustrious names of antiquity had become shadows of their former selves; their dependence upon Macedonia might be merely nominal, and easily shaken off, but they could exercise little influence on the general affairs of their country. Some of the islands, such as Rhodes more especially, stood apart as commercial emporiums, making no efforts at dominion on land. Philip, whom we have before noticed as king of Macedonia, still swayed a great military power, but he was hampered in all his projects by the jealousy of Attalus, king of Pergamus, and of Ptolemy, who from his distant throne at Alexandria ruled some Grecian cities on the borders of Macedonia and Thrace. To secure himself these possessions the Egyptian monarch had already invoked the patronage of the Roman republic. The Ætolians, a people of mere bandits, without a polity or even a king, were constantly harassing their neighbours all around, destroying everything and constructing nothing, forming themselves the centre of the political chaos which they propagated.

The excessive feebleness of the ancient cities of Greece was partly due to the degradation in which they had been plunged by luxury and dissipation, and by the withdrawal of their ablest citizens under the superior attractions of society at the brilliant courts of Antioch, Alexandria, Pergamus, and Cyrene. At Athens and Thebes there was no longer any public life at all. The Bœotians are said, indeed, to have formally forbidden their citizens to take part in politics. Sparta was subjected to a repeated series of revolutions, in which her magistrates were oftentimes massacred. Corinth allowed a garrison of Macedonians to occupy her city while another of Achæans held her citadel, and her own people looked on, as at a spectacle of the circus, while the two rival forces contended for superiority. But the population of all these places had dwindled to a very low point. The number of the Spartans, for instance, had diminished from 9,000 to 700. The marine of Athens was limited to three

vessels. The soil of Greece had never been able to support any large population; it was by their extensive commerce, and by the resources thence derived, that Athens and other maritime cities had maintained the numbers which made their power so great and their names so illustrious. With the decline of liberty their social activity had become paralysed, and the enervated descendants of the ancient free men of Hellas were content to live upon the stores accumulated by their ancestors, and as these became exhausted to perish with them.

The strength of Macedonia was no doubt more compact and the spirit of this younger people more vigorous. The Macedonians were still proud of the victories they had obtained under their great conquerors, and their monarchs did not cease to dream of a second empire of the world to be secured by the arts of a Philip and the arms of an Alexander. But the nation was poor, and could only wage a war of plunder; the genius of the Macedonians, never fertile in great men, had been depressed by long subjection to tyrants; the phalanx, the potent instrument with which they had broken the desultory array of the Greeks, and scattered the incoherent masses of the Persians, was really no match for the long but well-supported lines of the Roman legions. The weight of its attack was lost upon an organized force of cohorts and maniples which could yield and re-form, wheel to right and left, and skirmish in front or rear; and its power of enduring resistance might be worn out by the indefatigable perseverance of the conquerors of Hannibal. In her campaigns against the Greeks and Macedonians, Rome was enabled to dispense with the large armies of many legions which she had employed in Italy, and could move in advance or retreat with greater celerity, while she drew her supplies from a smaller area. Her blows were all the more vigorous for being more sudden, and better sustained.

Macedonia would, however, have been more powerful if her possessions, even at this period, had been less extensive. Besides her own proper soil, a land of rugged hills well calculated to produce a race of warriors, she maintained garrisons in many scattered positions throughout Greece, in Thessaly and Eubœa, in Opus and Locris, Phocis and Elatea, at Corinth, and in the recesses of Arcadia. She held the islands of Andros, Paros, Cythnos, and Thasos, together with various cities in Caria, and other coasts of the lesser Asia. Her fortified posts in Thrace, on the Propontis and the Bosphorus, which commanded the passage between the two continents, assured

her of the enmity of the monarchs of Asia, in addition to the jealousy in which she was held by every free state of Greece. Accordingly she was harassed on all sides; her policy was enfeebled by the necessity of making an armed appearance at so many points at once, or in rapid succession; she was incapacitated from forming any definite plans of action, and her strength was wasted by interminable marches and unforeseen expenses. To consolidate the forces of such an empire required the genius of another Alexander; it required an energy and elasticity in the national character which it no longer possessed; but under no circumstances perhaps could she have resisted the steady advance of the Roman power, which was now brought in contact with her through the agency of the Ætolians.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Romans commence the conquest of the East—Flamininus encounters the Macedonians—The victory at Cynoscephalæ—Philippus, king of Macedon, sues for peace—Flamininus declares the freedom of Greece.—(B.C. 200–195.)

TEN YEARS before the conclusion of the struggle with Hannibal the Senate had declared war against the king of Macedonia, and continued for seven years to carry it on, though only as a secondary object. For some time, indeed, under the pressing exigencies of the contest in Italy and Africa, the war with Philippus had been dropped, and he had been enabled to send 4,000 Macedonians to fight for Carthage on the field of Zama. The submission of her great rival left Rome free to concentrate her energies against this obstinate enemy. Straightway the Senate decreed a renewal of the war. But the commons felt or pretended to feel exhausted with the demands so constantly made upon them. They were in fact jealous of the nobles, whose privilege it was to enrol the legions, to lead them to victory, to reap the plunder, and to secure to themselves therewith the honours and offices of the city. The Senate proceeded, however, to carry out its views with a high hand. In the year 200 P. Sulpicius Galba and C. Aurelius Cotta were
U.C. 554. appointed consuls, and to the first of these was assigned the province of Macedonia. Arrangements were speedily set on foot for furnishing him with an army. An attempt perhaps was made to ward off the opposition of the people by the creation of decemvirs

for the distribution among them of land in Samnium and Apulia. The Roman games were celebrated with more than ordinary sumptuousness by the curule ædiles, and a second day repeated; vast quantities of corn which Scipio had sent from Africa were dispensed to the citizens, together with a sum of money. The citizens accepted the largess and admired the games, but they persisted nevertheless in their profession of repugnance to the renewal of war, and the rogation sent down to them by the Senate was rejected by almost the whole of the centuries. The tribune Bæbius undertook to make a criminal charge against the Senate in the spirit of his valiant predecessors; but his office carried with it less authority now than in the olden time. The fathers abused and insulted him in the curia, and laid the question again before the comitia, deigning only to enforce their policy with a public speech from the consul. The centuries voted a second time, and now at last ratified with their suffrage the decision of the real masters of the commonwealth. This transaction fully shows how completely under the military rule of the last century the aristocracy of Rome had recovered its predominance, though still maintaining the forms of a balanced constitution.

The Romans were about to plunge, indeed, into a career of eastern conquest, which did not stop till it led them at last to the Caspian and the Persian Gulf. But neither the people nor the aristocracy conceived at this moment any such vast results. The nobles were fully alive to the importance of securing the republic against the aggressive spirit of the Macedonian rulers. They were jealous, perhaps, of the moral influence of Greece. They were anxious to denude Carthage of future alliances. Still more the immediate temptations of warfare, with the wealth, the honours, the power at home which it ensured them, were becoming more and more irresistible. The people, on their part, though at times weary and reluctant, were still generally willing followers in a career of excitement and plunder. But beyond these direct incentives we shall not err in giving some weight to the gross passion for wider dominion which was working not at Rome only, but among all the leading states of the civilised world. The day of petty republics and loose federations had passed. The marvellous sweep of Greece over Asia had aroused the lust of empire. Carthage had aspired to sovereignty in the West; the kings of Macedonia, of Syria, and of Egypt still longed for the succession to Alexander throughout the East. If Rome entertained as yet no schemes of universal conquest, such as

are shadowed forth in the pretended testament of the Czar Peter, she was not, at least, tending towards it with the mere brute instinct with which the madrepore extends his empire over the bottom of the ocean. The moment was indeed critical. Attalus and the Rhodians had incited the Athenians to renounce their subjection to Macedonia, but their aid seems to have been confined to calling upon the Romans to intervene. Lævinus, the commander of the legions on the Macedonian border, joined urgently in this requisition. He represented how Philip had insulted and defied him. 'You think you' may do anything with me,' were the words of the insolent foreigner to Æmilius, 'because you are a young man, and a fine young man, and a Roman! But if you want war, you shall have it!' Such language was well calculated to determine the policy of the vacillating populace.

Rome declared war a second time against the tyrant of Macedon. While a great part of her disposable forces were retained in Italy to keep in check the still turbulent Gauls in the north, and Bruttians in the south, not more than 20,000 men could be transported across the Adriatic. The operations of the years 200 and 199 were conducted by Sulpicius Galba and Villius Tappulus, successively consuls. Athens was enabled to secure her deliverance; but though marked

by cruel reprisals on both sides, these campaigns were productive of no other signal incidents. In 198 the consul T.

Quinctius Flaminius arrived to take command of the Roman forces. The tribunes had declared him ineligible for the chief magistracy, inasmuch as he had not yet mounted the first round of the ladder of office, which commenced with the quæstorship; but the Senate had rejected their appeal, and the centuries had bowed to the Senate's decision. He reached the scene of action more promptly than his predecessors in command. He brought with him considerable reinforcements. Thus put upon his mettle he was determined to act vigorously. He immediately sought out the enemy on his own borders, and led the whole strength of his legions in array against him. He offered terms, indeed, but they were such as he knew would be intolerable. A battle ensued; it was well-contested. The result was for a moment doubtful, but by skill or luck Flaminius was enabled to throw a detachment on the rear of the enemy, and thus put him into confusion and worsted him. Philip conducted his shattered forces to his stronghold at Pella, and the Roman leader was left free to treat with the states of southern Greece, many of which he succeeded in attaching to his side. At his instance

the representatives of the Achæan league met to determine upon their course. The result, indeed, was to split them into two parties, and some of their cities made common cause with Macedonia. Flamininus, however, proclaimed that the general vote was in favour of the Romans, and declared himself Protector of the Achæan league and champion of the liberties of Greece.

After the expiration of his consulship Flamininus continued at the head of affairs in the capacity of proconsul, but he was anxious to have the merit of settling them himself and to bring them quickly to a conclusion. On both sides there was a desire for peace, and the Roman and Macedonian, attended by their principal allies, met in conference at the Pass of Thermopylæ. The Ætolians, who would not be satisfied without reducing Philip to extremity, did their best to insult and irritate him, but Flamininus soothed him, and induced him to send envoys to Rome and refer the decision of affairs to the Senate itself. When, however, the Senate opened the discussion by demanding his withdrawal from the three fortresses Demetrias, Chalcis, and Corinth, which he vauntingly called the Fetters of Greece, his agents at once declared themselves incompetent even to treat on so vital a point, and the negotiation fell to the ground. Rome had gained in public opinion even by this abortive reference to her power at a distance, and the states which had hitherto held themselves aloof from her were more inclined to take sides with the leader who professed to be the champion of their common cause. In 197 Flamininus could advance northward to Thermopylæ with the general support of the Greek people, as well as with the auxiliary force of Ætolian cavalry, which might serve him effectually against the heavy masses of the Macedonian phalanx. Philip shrank from meeting him among the hills and passes through which he was advancing, but awaited his arrival on ground chosen by himself on the plain of Thessaly near Scotussa. A great battle was fought at a place called Cynoscephalæ, in which the strength and weakness of the Macedonian army were in turn displayed. Philip had disposed the greater part of his forces in two phalanxes, each of 8,000 men. With the first he broke through the lines of the legions, which, however, closed in upon it again with no material loss; the other was suddenly attacked while in process of formation, and in a moment scattered to the winds. The victory of the Romans was decisive; their success might be embittered for a moment by the insolence of the Ætolians in claiming one-half at least of its merit; but they passed over the affront, treating the

U.C. 557.
B.C. 197.

remembrance of it in secret. Their allies were not to be trusted; but it would be easy to cast them off at a later period.

Philip felt that the cherished instrument of his power was broken in his hands. He remitted to the Senate the conditions of peace, and gladly accepted easier terms from Rome than he could have extorted from his implacable enemies nearer to him. The Ætolians felt themselves baffled, but Flamininus carried out the policy of the republic, which had no wish to crush the men whose alliance might still be servicable to it. An interval of suspense ensued while reference was made to the Senate, and commissioners appointed to settle on the spot the future condition of the Grecian cities. It was

U.C. 558. just a year after the battle of Cynoscephalæ that at the
B.C. 196. Isthmian games, at which the representatives of every

Grecian community attended, it was declared, with sound of trumpet, that the Roman Senate and T. Quinctius, its general, had liberated the whole of Greece from the power of Macedonia. The Greeks threw themselves into a frenzy of joy, eager to touch the hands of their deliverer and covering his head with garlands, as if he were the victor in all their games, and they had no other interest in them. The old national sports of Greece were now at best but a frivolous excitement, but the rejoicings of the Greeks at the exchange, for such it plainly was, of one master for another, were really more frivolous still.

The arrangements now made extended to the breaking up of Thessaly, long subject to Macedon, into a number of petty republics; the establishment of various independent communities in Illyria and Epirus; the restoration of Corinth to the Achæans, and above all the establishment of Athens as a free state, with the addition to her dominions of the islands of Delos, Paros, and others. The Ætolians alone were disappointed. Their claims, whatever they might be, were referred again to the Senate, and the Senate did not care to consider them.

The Romans had undertaken the protectorate of Greece; but the limits to which this obligation might be pushed extended beyond the continent of Europe. Antiochus, king of Syria, had concerted together with Philip a division between them of the Greek communities in Asia Minor which appertained at this time to the kingdom of the Ptolemies. While Philip was engaged hand-to-hand with the Romans his ally had occupied himself with making these acquisitions in his own behoof, and adding to them the reduction of other places in the western part of Asia Minor. It was not till

he had accomplished his views in that quarter that he threatened to lead his forces across the Hellespont, while at the same time he sent envoys to Flaminius to negotiate for the peaceable retention of his conquests. The Roman genera was not to be intimidated or cajoled. He required Antiochus to relinquish every Greek city which he had seized, and at the same time forbade him to cross over into Europe. While awaiting submission to these orders he turned his attention to affairs in another quarter. Sparta had fallen under the tyranny of Nabis, and had become more and more alienated from the rest of Greece, to which she properly belonged. But Argos had surrendered to the domination of Nabis also, and Flaminius represented to the Greeks the iniquity of suffering so integral a portion of their common country to remain thus subjected to the foreigner. The league at his instance declared war, and he led its forces by the side of the legions to the gates of Sparta. At the same time a Roman fleet arrived off the coast, and prevented the arrival of succours from abroad. Nabis was soon driven to extremities, Argos was restored, and a portion of the tyrant's own territory declared independent. The Achæans, indeed, A.U. 559. complained of these terms as too moderate, but Rome B.C. 195. maintained her usual policy in clipping the power of her various adversaries rather than destroying any one for the advantage of another.

Flaminius had now exercised the imperium, as consul and pro-consul, for nearly four years, and it was necessary that he should soon retire from the scene of his exploits. Rome, it seems, was not yet prepared to convert her protectorate over Greece into an absolute dominion, and her general was allowed to play a more honourable part, and declare that the Greeks should be left at liberty to govern themselves, while every Roman garrison should be withdrawn from her fortresses. Once more he summoned the states to a U.C. 560. general assembly, and solemnly took leave of them, en- B.C. 194. joining them to prove themselves in the eyes of Rome worthy of the gift of freedom which she had generously made them. Another scene of excitement occurred, and Flaminius himself was moved to tears with sympathetic emotion. In Scipio Africanus, and again in Quintius Flaminius, two men who deserve to be placed together as types of Roman greatness in its simplest and highest development, we may recognise the same general qualities of sternness and even ferocity in action combined with an occasional tenderness of feeling, both of which we shall find as we proceed to be

common characteristics of their nation. We may further remark how in both these great men their personal ambition was subordinated to a generous spirit of patriotism. The triumph, the highest reward of this virtue, which the Roman prized the highest, was never more justly conferred upon any Roman heroes than upon the conqueror of Hannibal and the liberator of the Greeks.

Meanwhile Greece, under the protectorate of the republic, which, with a generosity unusual to herself or to other conquerors, had left her the show at least of independence, enjoyed a period of repose, the happiest perhaps if not the brightest in the whole course of her annals. She enjoyed a respite from the tyranny of the Macedonians, which had kept her in alarm or suffering for a hundred and fifty years, and she had recovered sufficient strength and self-command to control the petty ambition of her several states, now again combined under one political system. The destruction of her works of art and the accumulated treasures of her age of grandeur might now be effectually stayed; the rapid decline of her industry and decrease of her population might receive a check. The numbers she could maintain on her own barren and mountainous territory were but small, but the carrying trade of the world had in other times made her rich and populous, and under the protection of Rome she might extend far and wide the operations of her mercantile marine. She might acquire, moreover, by the charm of her arts and literature a powerful influence over the minds of the stronger race which was beginning to balance in the West the preponderance which the successors of Alexander had so long exercised in the opposite quarter. To enjoy and to prolong this period of repose, the highest boon which she could now possibly obtain, it was only necessary that she should frankly accept the conditions imposed upon her. The policy of Rome demanded that she should be submissive, and that she should not be powerful. Rome was graciously pleased to allow her a nominal independence; this was as much as fortune could now secure for her, and this perhaps only for a time. She had still some generous spirits among her children who were galled by these conditions; but the truest patriots were those who controlled their own impatience in the interests of their countrymen.

CHAPTER XXIV.

War with Antiochus, king of Syria—He is defeated in the battle of Magnesia, and is required to withdraw from his acquisitions in Asia Minor—Formation of a kingdom of Asia in dependence upon Rome—War with the Celtiberians and Lusitanians in Spain—Complete reduction of Cisalpine Gaul and Sardinia.—(B.C. 191–178.)

WE rest for a moment with pleasure on the vision of peace and quiet which is opened to us by the terms accorded by Rome to Greece, but the general aspect of the world around us is still one of incessant action and hostile demonstrations. Rome was at deadly feud with the Gauls and the Spaniards in the north and west; the hostility of Carthage, to the south, was at best disguised only, and the ablest of the citizens of Carthage was still constantly intriguing against her. But Carthage herself was kept in check by the Numidians and Mauritians, on her western frontier, and harassed by internal dissensions by which Rome knew well how to profit. On the east the Ætolians were the implacable and indomitable enemies of the great republic, while the Ætolians in their turn were restrained by the Achæans under the Roman protectorate. The Achæans were at feud with Nabis, the tyrant of Sparta, and the activity they showed in their private quarrel under the direction of the brave Philopœmen moved the jealousy even of their protectors. Philip of Macedon now found it for his interest to take sides with Rome as a guarantee against the encroachments of the Syrian, Antiochus. Antiochus himself, glorying in some successes gained over the Bactrians and Indians, and exulting in the title of the Great, was bent on restoring the empire of a Cyrus or a Xerxes, and was threatening the independence of the petty kings of Bithynia and Cappadocia, with the help of the Galatians and other warlike tribes of Asia Minor. He had also another enemy on his flank, in the person of the king of Egypt. Among these conflicting elements the power of the Roman and the Syrian stood undoubtedly the highest. The Syrian might exceed in the numbers he could bring into the field, and in the infinite resources of an ancient civilisation which he wielded. The Roman, on the other hand, excelled in the personal bearing of his legions, and in the skill and conduct of his commanders. The wars, indeed, which Rome was still constantly waging against the hardy barbarians of Gaul and Spain were a school of military prowess; the armies she

trained in these campaigns were fit to do anything and to go anywhere; the vast multitudes which an Antiochus could bring into the field against them were scattered like chaff before them; in battle the Romans were ever victorious against the Asiatics, and in craft and policy they were little if at all inferior to them. As long, therefore, as the chiefs of the legions and the Senate maintained their loyalty to their common country their success was assured, and it was not till the civilised world lay prostrate at their feet that they forgot their duty to Rome, and turned their arms upon one another.

In the wars of Greece and Asia which continued for many years to occupy the chief attention of the republic, the triumphs of her policy followed in rapid and unvaried succession. Antiochus had ventured to plant his fortresses on the European shore of the Hellespont, and had advanced even to the frontiers of Greece in defiance of her protests and menaces. At Thermopylæ his armies were

u.c. 563. encountered almost at the outset by the consul Acilius in

the year 191, and driven across the sea into Asia Minor.

The consul found himself at leisure to turn round upon the Ætolians and inflict a severe check upon that enemy also. Disembarrassed of the foe on their flank, and assisted by Philippus, who prepared stores for their army as they advanced, the Romans, now led by Scipio Africanus and his brother Lucius, effected the passage of the Hellespont, and sought out the great Antiochus in his retreat at Ephesus. It was in vain that he had at his side the veteran Hannibal, who had long been the soul of the intrigues by which the enemies of Rome had been marshalled against her, and who, since he had been expelled from Carthage by the success of the faction there opposed to him, had wandered from coast to coast, and fixed himself at last as the trusted adviser of Antiochus. Hannibal seems, indeed, to have been unable to make any head against the Romans with the wretched troops which the Syrian could place under his command, but the Romans were still alarmed at the bitterness of his hatred and the persistency of his efforts against them, and they did not disdain to create a jealousy against him by pretending to bestow attentions upon him and make him offers of their confidence. At last Antiochus was driven to sue for peace, but the only answer vouchsafed him was the demand that he should evacuate Asia Minor even to the line of the Taurus. Antiochus preferred to risk a battle. He was met and worsted by Lucius Scipio at Magnesia in a battle in which about 30,000 Romans overthrew 80,000 Asiatics, and pretended to have slain 50,000 of them, with the loss of a few

hundreds only. The Galatians, the children of a Gaulish invasion of a century previously, were the only troops who made any show of resistance. On that day the fate of Asia was sealed for the whole duration of the Roman empire. The Romans affected, indeed, to think much of Antiochus, but he was no foeman worthy of their steel. He acceded at once to all that was required of him, renounced his pretensions to any portion of Asia Minor, surrendered his chariots, his elephants, and his treasures, and gave up his fleet to be burnt by the conquerors. He was further required and would not have hesitated to deliver up Hannibal, but the Carthaginian escaped to carry on his intrigues with no better success elsewhere.

The immediate result of the defeat of Antiochus was the formation of a 'kingdom of Asia' formed from the spoils of the Syrian monarchs between the Hellespont and Mount Taurus. Eumenes, king of Pergamus, had fortunately sided with the Romans. He was well fitted to become a puppet in their hands, and to him were given the rich provinces of Lydia and Phrygia, Mysia, and Lycaonia, the greater part of the great peninsula of Asia Minor. The native chiefs and people were equally pleased to be delivered from the brigandage exercised by the Galatians, and the more systematic extortions of Antiochus. By accepting the protection of Rome they might hope to be freed also from the exactions of the Roman soldiery, who under the lax discipline of the consul Manlius were beginning to give the rein to their rapacity and licentiousness, or rather perhaps were left by the Senate to provide for their own necessities. The pretended alliance of Rome was, indeed, merely a disguised subjection; the Senate began already to flatter itself with the spectacle of the kings who attended servilely upon it. Meanwhile even beyond the Taurus the nations stretching to the Euphrates heard with awe the name of the great western republic, and even at the court of the king of Persia, the Empire of Rome, it was whispered, extended to the frontier of Cilicia.

Manlius and his colleague Fulvius were the first, perhaps, of the Roman commanders who ventured openly to declare war without the consent and direction of the government at home. It was thus that Manlius had attacked and defeated the Galatians; and thus did Fulvius turn his forces against the Ætolians, besiege Ambracia, and compel the enemy to seek terms of peace at his hands. The return of the victorious legions homeward was thus secured; but a large portion of their enormous booty was snatched from them by

an insurrection of Thracians on their flank. The Romans were not intoxicated by their successes. They still kept faith with Greece, and when their armies had repassed the Adriatic they left not a single garrison behind them. They were content with the terror of their invincible army, supported as it was by a devoted party in every state and city in the East. In the year 189 L. Scipio B.C. 565. enjoyed a military and Æmilius a naval triumph over Antiochus, and Scipio ventured to emulate the glory of his brother, the victor of Africa, by assuming the title of Asiaticus. In 187 Manlius and Fulvius succeeded also to the honours of the triumph.

We are not to suppose, however, that the activity of the Romans was confined during the wars of Greece and Asia to the eastern quarter of the world. The legions had been employed not less assiduously in the conquest of the West, while Rome had never been left in ease and security even on the soil of Italy itself. The war-like tribes of Spain, which had constantly risen to support the Romans against their first enemies, the Carthaginians, were not the more disposed to acquiesce in the Roman supremacy when the Carthaginians were overthrown and expelled. There was, indeed, little for the Romans to gain, as regarded tangible wealth, in the rude mountains which abutted upon the waste waters of the Atlantic. Here and there, indeed, on the southern coast the Tyrians had planted colonies which had grown into flourishing cities. Here and there both gold and silver mines had been discovered, and perhaps the greater part of the precious metals then in use throughout the world was derived from the working of their yet unexhausted veins. But these sources of wealth and objects of cupidity were few and difficult of access. Blind as the ancients were to their true economical interests, even the Romans, the blindest of them all, could not have supposed it cheaper to fight than to trade for them. We must be content to attribute the pertinacity with which Rome continued to assail the liberties of Spain to a mere military instinct, a lust of fighting for its own sake, the results of which were really disastrous to her in all respects but one, but that perhaps the most important for her policy of all, inasmuch as the wars of Spain constituted a regular school of military training, and continued to brace the discipline of the legions, which the facile victories of the East were as constantly relaxing and enervating. At a much later period, when the Empire was firmly established throughout the world, the Romans could say that it had taken 200 years to conquer Spain, and this is very nearly the interval which elapsed between their first

meddling with Spanish affairs at the siege of Saguntum and the final subjugation of the peninsula by Augustus. During all this time Spain undoubtedly supplied Rome with many of her bravest soldiers, and educated not a few of her ablest generals.

In the year 200 B.C., after the defeat of Hannibal and the reduction of Carthage, the Romans might consider themselves as masters of the Iberian peninsula. They occupied all the chief cities on the coast, and the rude tribes of the interior had for the most part sought their protection, and professed to accept their supremacy. But with the disappearance of the Carthaginians the natives of central Spain became impatient of a new ruler. The Celtiberians, entrenched in the fastnesses of the mountain ranges from which the great rivers of the country flow, provoked and maintained a long-continued warfare. An attempt to organise the whole territory into the form of a Roman province was the signal for a general outbreak in 197. The prætor Sempronius was slain. The Lusitanians, in the east, the Vaccæans and Vettones, united with the Celtiberians, and kept the Roman invaders in constant alarm. Cities they had none; their villages seemed for the most part inaccessible; but they were deficient in organisation. They had no provisions or military resources for regular hostilities; with all the spirit and many of the advantages of their descendants, the guerillas who kept at bay the invasion of Napoleon, they had no basis of operations on the coast of the Atlantic, no powerful allies at their back to furnish them with the sinews of war. The discipline and pertinacity of the Romans could not fail to prevail in the end. Victory after victory was gained by the indomitable legions; and barren though these triumphs for the most part were, they told in the end, if only by the devastation of the hostile territory. M. Porcius Cato was among the most noted of the Roman leaders in this terrible war. No Roman ever carried out the policy of his country with more ruthless severity. He could boast that he had dismantled 400 fortresses between the Pyrenees and the Bætis. A Cnæus Scipio, a Fulvius, a Quinctius, and a Calpurnius are named among the victorious leaders of the Roman arms in these petty affairs. Sempronius Gracchus, the father of the illustrious brothers of whom more will be said in due time, carried his standards into the heart of Celtiberia, and made himself master of 300 fortresses. He distinguished himself further by the attempt to tame the barbarian enemy by the methods of civilisation, and deserves to be honoured for the

attempt, however transient may have been the effects of his milder policy.

From the year 178 Spain might be regarded as conquered a second time. The strife had, indeed, been carried on at a disadvantage;

u.c. 576. the conduct of affairs in Asia, and even close to her own

home she had been obliged to keep herself constantly armed against the restless revolts of her Gaulish subjects. The Carthaginians in withdrawing from Italy had left the seeds of war still ripe among their allies in the north of the peninsula. Hamilcar had raised a force of 40,000 Gauls, had burnt Placentia, and made an attack upon Cremona, in the year 200. Cremona was saved by the

u.c. 554. prætor Furius, who killed, it is said, 35,000 of the enemy:

so reckless are the numerical statements of our authorities. Three years later, however, this war seemed still important enough to require the presence of both the consuls with their complete armies. There was treachery, as usual, among the Gauls, and the most powerful of their tribes were overwhelmed by the assistance of their own countrymen. The great Scipio was himself employed in these desultory and inglorious operations; but he brought the war to an issue by the reduction of the Boii, the greater part of whom he drove to expatriate themselves and seek an asylum on the banks of the Danube. We may at last consider the Gauls of the Cisalpine as finally subdued, and their country reduced to the form of a Roman province. Colonies were established or renewed at Placentia, Cremona, Bononia, Mutina, and Parma. Multitudes of the natives were transported into the vacant places in the heart of Italy. After 40,000 of their people had thus been settled in Samnium, colonies planted at Pisa and Luca kept watch over the still untamed Ligurians. Some wandering Gauls who had issued into the Cisalpine from beyond the Alps were summarily ejected, and bidden to keep themselves henceforth within their proper bounds. The little peninsula of Istria was reduced in 177. About the same time disturbances in Corsica and Sardinia were controlled by Sempronius Gracchus. Many were slaughtered, much tribute was imposed, and of the Sardinians so large a number were reduced to slavery, that 'Sards to sell' became a cant phrase for everything that was cheap and worthless.

CHAPTER XXV.

Deaths of three great men at the same period: Hannibal, Scipio Africanus, and Philopemen—Rome appealed to as arbiter or patron by many Eastern states and potentates—War with Perseus (third Macedonian war) decided by the battle of Pydna—Captivity and death of Perseus, and annexation of his kingdom—Farther aggressions of Rome in the East—The Achæan league dissolved by Metellus, and Corinth taken and sacked by Mummius—Greece becomes a Roman province—Carthage denounced by Cato—The third Punic war—Capture and destruction of Carthage by P. Scipio Æmilianus—Celebration of secular games in the 608th year of the city—Wars in Spain—Resistance of Viriathus and the Lusitanians—Catastrophe of Mancinus—Fall of Numantia.—(B.C. 183-133.)

THE year of the city 571, B.C. 183, the consulship of Q. Fabius Labeo and M. Claudius Marcellus, is rendered notable by the death of three men of great mark in the history of the times. Hannibal, as we have seen, had been demanded by the Romans from Antiochus, but he had escaped and taken refuge in Crete, and afterwards with Prusias, king of Bithynia, and possibly in the interval with another Antiochus who reigned in Armenia. His career, however, during this period had been obscure. He had suspended his hopeless intrigues against the Romans, and had sought, perhaps, to ingratiate himself with his new patrons by assisting them in their own petty affairs. Rome at last required her great general, T. Flamininus, to demand him from Prusias, with a threat of immediate hostilities. The king sent troops to arrest him, which blocked up all the avenues by which he had provided for flight, and Hannibal swallowed the poison which he had kept concealed about his person. Such an end of such a man has always been regarded as specially tragic. But he had undertaken a task beyond the strength of one man in pitting himself alone against an united people. Hero as he was he contended against a nation of heroes. His error, though it may enhance his military greatness, must greatly detract from his fame as a political champion. It is plain that the part of the Carthaginian Milo was played out. Had his life been extended he could only have fallen into lower intrigues and greater obscurity. His suicide was at least opportune and dignified, and lesser men will shrink from the pedantry of questioning his moral right to commit it. Even in more enlightened times a still greater man has been taunted for not having accomplished the same feat under less urgent circumstances. Hannibal at least did not half-poison himself, like Napoleon, take an emetic and live.

Hannibal has been often compared with the first Napoleon. The one seems by general assent to be regarded as the most eminent of ancient, the other of modern commanders. Arnold, whose historic insight far exceeds that of any of our recent historians, believed himself capable of appreciating the tactics of the great captain who maintained himself so long against all the power of Rome in the heart of Italy. Possibly we may not all have the same confidence in the authorities on whom Arnold relies, in their knowledge of localities, in their computation of numbers, in their acquaintance with the conditions and circumstances under which the opposing parties in all cases engaged. Everything that the Romans wrote of Hannibal was tinged with deep and ignoble prejudice; but their carelessness in narration was at least equal to their unfairness. The broad facts remain of the length of the struggle, and the apparent inadequacy of the means of the invader; of the failure of his policy in constructing a general alliance of the Italians against Rome, and finally of the many signal successes which he gained against all the odds of fortune.

Hannibal died in discomfiture and exile. The same year witnessed the decease of his rival, Scipio Africanus, who had lived, indeed, to forfeit the authority he had enjoyed in the republic after the victory of Zama, but was still regarded by the mass of his countrymen with reverence and affection. Of his noble character, as the representative of Roman patriotism at its highest point, enough has been said already. The factions of the city took advantage, however, of the satiety which always sooner or later comes over a democracy in regard to its greatest heroes. The terms he imposed upon Antiochus caused discontent as too lenient. Soon after his return his brother Lucius was charged with malversation in his accounts, and when Publius indignantly tore up the papers presented against him he was promptly accused himself of arrogance and incivism. Lucius was severely mulcted. Publius himself was accused before the people by the tribune Nævius. The great Africanus disdained to make reply except by an eloquent encomium on his own signal services. He reminded the Romans that the day of his trial was the anniversary of the victory of Zama, and called upon them to desist from the miserable object before them, and march with him to the Capitol and offer the solemn thanks of the people to the immortal gods. This bold stroke was perfectly successful; the accusation fell at once to the ground. But Scipio retired to his seat at Liternum, in Campania, refused again to visit

Rome, and directed that his remains should be interred at a distance from the city. 'Ungrateful land of mine,' he exclaimed, 'thou shalt not even keep my bones.' It should be remembered as adding, perhaps, some point to the story, that the Cornelii, of whom the Scipios were a branch, were permitted, alone of all the noble Romans at that period, to be buried and not burnt. The well-known sarcophagus of one of the family still remains in attestation of this privilege.

In the same year died another hero, over whom the reader of Roman history may for a moment linger, though one that never came in conflict with Rome or exercised important influence on Roman affairs. Philopœmen may deserve, both for his valour and his statesmanship, to be designated the last of the Greeks. But both his policy and his military career bore reference to the internal struggles of the Greeks among themselves, and in nothing did he show his patriotism to more advantage than in the self-control with which he refrained himself from disputing the irresistible influence of Rome, and restrained his unstable countrymen from provoking her avarice or ambition. His people returned this good service with loyalty and affection. The Achæan league chose him eight times for their general. He lived thus in usefulness and honour to his seventieth year. Then it was that he became entangled in a petty squabble with the Messenians, urged on, it may be feared, by the intrigues of Flamininus. A personal enemy, named Deinocrates, gained the better of him, made him prisoner, and after subjecting him to gross indignity, required him to swallow hemlock. In vain did the mass of the Greeks rise to avenge his death, though they buried his remains with the highest honours. The democracy of Greece showed certainly a higher sense of duty to its hero than the aristocracy of Rome.

The years which immediately followed these distinguished deaths constituted a proud period in the Roman annals. The arms of the republic were not wholly unemployed, and the campaigns in Spain and Istria, though of trifling moment in themselves, were crowned with continuous successes. But now for the first time the kings and potentates of the earth began to send their envoys to Rome, and keep themselves constantly before the eyes of the people, in whom they recognised their patrons and protectors. Philip of Macedon deigned to allow his son Demetrius to be educated in Roman manners, and moulded into a fitting instrument of Roman policy. The result, indeed, was such as might have been expected. The

youth became an object of jealousy to his father, and on his return home was speedily sacrificed to the interest of his brother Perseus.

U.C. 575.

B.C. 179.

Philip himself, worn out with mortification and remorse, soon followed him to the grave, and left in Perseus a successor not less able than himself, and more impatient of subjection. Meanwhile the streets of Rome were crowded with embassies from Eumenes the Bithynian, Ariarathes the Cappadocian, Pharnaces the Armenian; from the commonwealths of Achæa, Sparta, and Rhodes; nor may we suppose that the distant realm of Egypt remained unrepresented in the antechambers of the Senate-house. The Romans were becoming intoxicated with the extraordinary fortunes of their empire, and the policy of moderation with which they had spared the weakness of Greece and borne with the petulance of Macedonia was about to be exchanged for a more ruthless ambition and a more unbridled greed of plunder.

The provocation to the third Macedonian war, or the war with Perseus, seems to have been entirely on the side of the Romans. The charges they made against him of attacking some of their allies, of seducing others from the interests of the republic, and of making an attempt on the life of King Eumenes, he might, whether truly or falsely, deny; but his anxiety to offer terms even after a first success against a Roman consul, shows that he was well inclined to keep at peace, though evidently not ill prepared for the alternative. The reply of the Romans was peremptory and insolent. They refused to negotiate at all with an armed enemy, and required him to make unconditional submission. Perseus might have expected this defiance. He determined to make a desperate resistance. For two years he was enabled to make head against the enemy. But the affair was brought to a close by the abilities of L. Æmilius Paulus, consul in 168, son of the Æmilius who had fallen at Cannæ. He

U.C. 586.

B.C. 168.

gained the decisive battle of Pydna, and entirely broke the power of the ancient kingdom of Macedon. The strong places of the country surrendered without further resistance. Perseus gave himself up to the Romans, in the vain hope, perhaps, of generous forbearance. He was required, in the first place, to follow the triumph of his conqueror, and was then placed in confinement, where he died a few years later, not without grave suspicion of base and cruel ill-treatment. The Romans adopted the new policy of transporting all the chief people of Macedonia into Italy, to leave unimpeded the settlement of the country, which was divided into four districts, placed under distinct republican governments. The famous title of 'King of Macedon' disappears hence-

forth from the page of history; but the country was not definitively reduced to the form of a Roman province till some years later, when a man named Andriscus, pretending to be a son of Perseus, roused it to revolt, but was easily put down, and its independence was finally extinguished.

U.C. 603
B.C. 151.

But the war with Perseus had further results. Rome had probably a deep policy in making it a pretext for stringent inquiries into the conduct of her allies and dependents. There were none of them, perhaps, who had not favoured in their hearts the last asserter of the independence of civilised communities. It does not appear, indeed, that distinct charges of overt assistance could be brought against any of them. But a way was prepared for future aggressions. Eumenes was insulted and threatened. The Rhodians were specially selected for immediate punishment, and a portion of their continental possessions in Asia Minor taken from them. The vengeance of the Romans fell more signally upon some people of Epirus, where the gallant Æmilius Paulus was used as the instrument of terrible devastation. The legions no doubt required to be fed, their officers demanded enrichment, the mob of the city called for shows and entertainments.

The Achæans had ever remained faithful to their policy of passive submission. It was impossible to fix any act of disloyalty upon them. But their time too was come. The Romans condescended to make use of the intrigues of a traitor among them named Callicrates, who professed to discover to them the defection of some of the most eminent of his countrymen, whom he represented as having held communications with Perseus. The government, it was allowed, had been perfectly blameless; against individuals no proof could be produced. But as with the chiefs of Macedon so with these. Many of the most eminent were required to present themselves at Rome to meet the charges alleged against them. They were sent to divers places at a distance in Italy, and detained without trial for a space of seventeen years, till even the stern Cato interceded for them in his capacity of censor, at the instance of Scipio Æmilianus, the personal friend of the historian Polybius, who happened to be himself one of these unfortunates.

This injustice was a prelude to the end. Unfortunately a tolerable pretext at last occurred, when, among the many mutations in the government of the fickle people, Achæa fell under the rule of an intemperate faction, forgetful of the real position of their state as an indulged dependent upon the Roman power. The Achæans made an attack upon Sparta for disloyalty to the league. The Spartans

promptly complained to Rome. Rome sent her commissioners under pretence of inquiry, and when the Achæans made matters worse by studied impertinence to these formidable agents, they were instructed to retort by declaring the sovereign pleasure of the Senate that not only Sparta, but Corinth, Argos, and other important members of the league should now be released from all connexion with it. These oppressive measures were followed by an immediate outburst, but the revolt of the Greeks can hardly be said to have been occasioned by it. The movement was not due to the desperate frenzy of a people, but to the reckless vanity of a petty set of demagogues, who set the slaves at liberty, and enlisted them in the slender ranks of the national army, while they raised the funds for their support by tyrannical and arbitrary requisitions on peaceable and perhaps timid proprietors. A national levy could have been of no avail; but the efforts of a faction were sufficient to draw upon the whole nation the vengeance which was due to themselves alone. Metellus, indeed, anxious to secure the merit of pacifying Greece, offered moderate terms of submission; but the leaders of the revolt persuaded their people that his moderation was a sign of weakness, and absurdly sent forward a force to occupy the pass of Thermopylæ. The first appearance of the legions sufficed to put these patriots to flight, which was followed by a great slaughter. Metellus advanced with no further impediment to Corinth, but his term of command had now expired, and he was obliged to relinquish it to a ruder and harsher leader, L. Mummius. The taking of Corinth by this barbarian was signalised by every horror usual in Roman warfare; but it was rendered famous beyond similar catastrophes by the amount of valuable plunder which the Romans acquired, and by the brutal recklessness with which under this commander they destroyed pictures and statues and other trophies of Grecian art. Gold in abundance was carried away from the ruins, but the masterpieces in bronze were more precious than gold. Corinth lay in ruins for a hundred years, to be replanted after that period as a Roman colony, and resume her natural pre-eminence as an emporium of commerce and a seat of luxury and intelligence. But with the fall of Corinth fell the last shadow of the liberties of Greece. Achæa was reduced to the form of a Roman province, from which she never again emerged. The history of Greece as the classic soil of genius and independence ends with the year B.C. 146, the 608th of the city.

U.C. 608.

B.C. 146.

The same year, 148, which witnessed the fall of Greece was signalised also by the overthrow and final ruin of Carthage. From the era of the defeat of Zama the existence of the most formidable rival of Rome had been a slow and almost hopeless agony. She had been deprived even of the means of self-defence against her natural enemies on the soil of Africa. Massinissa might intrigue against her, and at every opportunity make encroachments upon her territory, while he was heard to declare that the Carthaginians were merely interlopers in the heritage of the Moors and the Numidians, and that the time was at hand when they should be expelled from a land that was not rightfully theirs. Carthage complained to Rome of these affronts, but Rome little heeded, or perhaps secretly encouraged them. The Numidians made further aggressions; the Senate promised redress, but still remained inactive. Meanwhile Hannibal, the last terror of the Senate, had died, the war with Antiochus had terminated in complete success, Rome had no further occasion even to temporise, and Cato, who had been sent as envoy to Carthage, denounced her before the Senate as even yet too formidable a neighbour to be suffered to stand erect. Plucking some fresh figs from the folds of his toga, 'This fruit,' he exclaimed, 'has been brought from Carthage—so nigh to us is a city so strong and so prosperous—Carthage must be destroyed!'

Cato was at this period in the full ripeness of his authority and influence. He was a constant speaker in all the debates of the Senate; and he ended every speech he made with the same terrible words, 'Carthage must be destroyed!' His eloquence and his arguments were addressed to no unwilling ears. Rome in the year 149 was free to enter upon another war. It was easy to find a pretext in the discontent which Carthage could not but express at the indignities to which she was subjected. Of all the aggressions of Rome none perhaps was more unprovoked than that which issued in the third Punic war, and led to the rapid defeat and conquest of Carthage. Massinissa died that same year, and so did Cato himself; the one at the age of ninety, and the other at eighty-five. Both had been lifelong enemies of the devoted city, but to neither of them was it given to witness her final destruction. The reduction of the citadel of Byrsa, and the defeat of the Punic general Hasdrubal by P. Scipio Æmilianus rendered further resistance hopeless; but the people still manned their walls, and fought with desperation, while the women, according to the story, cut off their hair to furnish them with bowstrings; and Carthage, taken at last by

storm, suffered the cruel fate of all cities which Rome most feared
U.C. 608. and hated, and was levelled with the ground, after its
B.C. 146. illustrious career of seven hundred years.

While the Commissioners of the Senate were marking out the limits of the Carthaginian territory and reducing it to a Roman province under the name of Africa, Scipio himself was contemplating the smoking ruins of the city, and pensively uttering the verses of Homer, in which Jove forebodes the ruin 'of holy Ilium with Priam and the sons of Priam.' In this very year, if we may select one of two slightly varying traditions, Rome had celebrated her secular games for the fourth time since she had begun to be conscious of her own greatness, and prescient perhaps of its increase. This year, indeed, the 608th from her foundation, deserves to be well remembered, for not only did she at this epoch finally subdue both Greece and Carthage, but from henceforth, it may be said, she never again encountered an enemy worthy to be pitted against her. The long career of her conquests, if they did not reach their furthest limit at this moment, or indeed for three hundred years later, had at least raised her now above all opposing forces. No foe could henceforth hope to contend with her single-handed, and it was only by the banding of every power together, or by taking advantage of her internal dissensions, that once or twice perhaps in after-times some trouble and some show of anxiety was forced upon her.

After the conquest of Greece and Carthage it was in Spain only that the Roman arms continued for many years to find exercise. The character of the country and of the people who inhabited it still rendered it as difficult as ever to subdue or keep in subjection. Nevertheless, the prætors, a Gracchus, a Brutus, a Calpurnius, and Scipio himself, advanced step by step. The Lusitanians, on the western shores of the peninsula, produced one great man, Viriathus, whose name must live in history. The Romans themselves signalled the valour with which he made head against them for eight years, nor have they scrupled to record the treachery by which he was at last surprised and destroyed by their leader Cæpio. But Pompeius Strabo was induced to make a treaty with the Numantians which he dared not avow in the Senate; his successor Mancinus was signally defeated, and constrained to pledge himself that his captured troops should not serve against them. It deserves to be noted, as one of the inconsistencies of the Roman history, or the Roman character, that the Senate, who had shown little scruple in the most daring defiance of truth and justice on so many other

occasions, now, while they refused to ratify a shameful or disastrous compact, actually delivered its disowned author into the hands of the enemy. We must suspect that Mancinus was personally unpopular, or that he had foes at home, to whom this specious sacrifice was not unpleasing.

The struggle of the Numantians, a little people, not numbering more than 8,000 fighting-men, against the whole power of Rome, which was now combined against them, is one of the most gallant and obstinate on record. Scipio, the conqueror of Carthage, was named consul in 134 for the special purpose of bringing it to a successful issue, after it had already continued with much loss and disgrace to the Romans for nine years. With a force of 60,000 men he blockaded Numantia, and at last reduced it by famine, after most of its citizens had fallen by his sword or by their own. The remaining inhabitants suffered the fate of the Carthaginians and the Corinthians: some brought to Rome to follow the conqueror's chariot, and the mass of them sold as slaves on the spot. Numantia itself was razed to the ground; it never had the fortune to be restored like Carthage and Corinth, and it is doubtful whether its ruins may still be traced near the westernmost sources of the river Douro.

A.U. 617.
B.C. 137.

U.C. 621.
B.C. 133.

CHAPTER XXVI.

General account of the Roman empire after the conquest of Greece and Carthage—internal constitution of the city—The comitia of the curies, the centuries, and the tribes—Their aristocratic character—Their respective functions—The Senate initiates legislative measures; the consuls convene the centuries, and the tribunes convene the tribes, to sanction them—The nobles, the Senate, and the knights—Appointment by the Senate to the highest provincial commands—Election to the magistracies of the city obtained by profusion in shows and gratuities—Struggle between the Senate and the knights for the emoluments of office in the provinces.

THE power of Rome was now paramount in the four great peninsulas which project into the Mediterranean, together with its principal islands, while her influence and authority were recognised at almost every point along its far-reaching coast-line. Italy, the centre and nucleus of this power, was either 'Roman soil' or was placed under the ultimate control of the prætors and other magistrates of Rome. Spain, Greece, and Asia Minor were reduced substantially to the form of provinces; so were also the islands of the

Tyrrhene, the Ionian, and the Ægean seas. Another province was constituted on the opposite coast of Africa, comprising the dominion of Carthage, which corresponded generally with modern Tunis; while the kingdoms of Numidia on the west, and of Greece and Egypt eastward, were retained, as we have seen, in a state of dependence or even pupilage. At the eastern end of the Mediterranean the Jews had entered into relations of alliance with the republic; the independence of Syria was imperfect and precarious; Rhodes, a wealthy centre of maritime commerce, was indulged with freedom, which she was fain to purchase with the impious flattery, till then unexampled, but common at a later period, of erecting a statue to the divinity of Rome; while a few petty states of Asia existed only on sufferance. The rugged districts of Illyria offered little temptation to Roman cupidity, but the subjection of Macedonia was fully assured. Massilia and Narbo, in the south of Gaul, cultivated the alliance of the Senate, and were about to invite its assistance against the surrounding barbarians, and lay the foundations of a Roman province beyond the Alps. The first was the offspring of a Grecian colony from Phocæa, in Ionia, which had become the most flourishing emporium of Western commerce; the other was a city apparently of native growth, and, together with Tolosa and Biterræ, exercised a great civilising influence over the region of south-western Gaul.

The Romans regarded themselves as a race of conquerors, with a mission to govern rather than to civilise. They were to be the rulers of mankind, not their teachers. Accordingly at every point beyond the limits of their colonies they encamped rather than settled. A standing force of one or more legions, with numerous auxiliary battalions, was maintained in each of their provinces, and every year, or at a later period triennially, an officer with the style of proconsul or proprætor, having served the highest magistracies at home, was sent forth to command it. This functionary wielded the whole authority of the state, civil as well as military, within his own province, and was required to govern with a single eye to the security and enrichment of the republic.

During his term of office his acts were unquestioned; if he had not strictly the right to declare war against a potentate on his frontier, his instructions might generally cover any excess of zeal which tended to the advancement of his country's interests. On his return home, however, his quæstor was required to submit to the Senate an account of his proceedings, and these might be disavowed by the hostile vote of an opposite faction. While

every act of the magistrates of the city was regulated more or less strictly by rule and precedent, if not by written enactment, the proconsul was at liberty to administer justice to the provincials according to the edict or programme published by himself on assuming the government. The organisation of the conquered territories in Etruria and Samnium, already described, was extended to Hispania and Africa, Greece and Asia. Some communities were allowed to enjoy a qualified independence; some were invested with Latin or Italian privileges; the territory of others was confiscated, wholly or in part, to the domain of the republic; tolls and customs were exacted, partly for imperial, partly for local expenditure; but a contribution, varying in amount, levied upon the produce of the land, formed a constant source of revenue to the state. Such was the wealth which accrued to the conquerors on the reduction of Macedonia that from thenceforth the land-tax was wholly remitted to the favoured soil of Italy.

With the rights of conquest thus understood we may imagine the tyranny to which the conquered people were subjected. The spoliation of the provinces by the chiefs and their subordinates was not only connived at, to a great extent it was positively encouraged and defended, on the plea that to impoverish the fallen enemy was to cut the sinews of future revolt. Neither the property nor the honour nor even the lives of the provincials were safe from the cupidity of the proconsul, and of the *cohort* of officials whom he carried in his train. It was fortunate, indeed, that the rapacity of these tyrants was so often directed to seizing the choicest works of ancient art, and transporting them to Rome, which proved the safest receptacle for those precious relics of a perishing civilisation; for the Greeks themselves in their intestine struggles seldom spared however they might profess to appreciate them. The rude conquerors of Greece and Asia imbibed a taste for these monuments of a genius with which they had so little themselves in common, and succeeded in persuading the still ruder populace at home that no trophies of victory were so glorious as the works of Grecian statuaries and painters. The provincials, who had been born amidst these cherished treasures, groaned at the loss of them, for which many a bitter scoff at their ignorant spoilers afforded slender consolation; nevertheless they learnt to profit by their security from the worse miseries of foreign warfare, and extracted wealth from their fertile soil more rapidly than their masters could consume it. Achaia, indeed, or central Greece, was stricken with a palsy from which no

domestic tranquillity could restore her, and continued to dwindle in population and resources. The ancient arts of Carthage perished with the decay of the Punic element in her population, which seems to have been quickly exhausted; but the progress of improvement was felt sensibly in Asia; and the youthful vigour of Spain, now first turned to the pursuits of industry and letters, struck deep into the soil, and produced in the course of ages an abundant harvest of intellectual and social improvement. On the whole it was the effete and imbecile among the nations that were extinguished by the blow which struck down their liberties; but the young and lusty rallied from the shock and rebounded from the pressure. The empire of Rome became, throughout large portions of the globe, the creator of a new life of progress and development.

Meanwhile the warlike instincts of the Roman people, dispersed over a great part of Italy or planted in colonies beyond it, continued in full play. The wealth of the East and West, which served to inflame its cupidity, had not yet enervated its vital forces. Its armies maintained the old traditions of discipline and obedience, as well as their ancient valour; its officers, ambitious and greedy for themselves, were ever devoted to the glory of their country, and inspired with zeal for the extension of her sway. Though the march of Roman conquest still advanced for another century with almost unabated vigour—which was not, indeed, exhausted even in a second or a third—yet all these conditions of a flourishing and lasting empire began to decline from this period, and the social decay which commenced at the heart spread slowly through the members of the whole body. It is important to pause at this point in our history, and take a rapid view of the moral causes of this decay, and note the seeds of destruction already germinating in the political constitution of the republic.

Notwithstanding the high reputation for disinterested virtue which the ancient Romans have obtained with posterity, we learn that no people were ever more intensely devoted to the making of money. They amassed riches not only by plunder in war, but at home by usury and thrift, abroad by commerce and speculation. To the possession of this much-coveted wealth they were ever ready to pay the most slavish deference. Hence, whatever may have been the real character of their political organisation so long as a ruling caste held predominance in the republic, the equalisation of the rival orders was followed by the establishment of a plutocracy almost pure and simple. The old constitution, such as it is repre-

sent to us, of the patrician curies, or of the heads of *gentes* or houses, of those who alone were proprietors, alone were judges, alone priests and augurs—of those, in short, who formed among themselves the ancient commonwealth of the Quirites—had passed away. The comitia of the curies still nominally existed, and was, indeed, convened for the performance of certain religious ceremonies, but it had no political weight. The real elements of power resided in the comitia of the centuries and tribes; and in both of these, though differently constituted, the influence of property prevailed over numbers. To secure this predominance in assemblies which embraced the whole body of the Roman people some ingenious contrivance was required. The citizens were divided, as we have seen, into thirty-five tribes; each tribe was subdivided into senior and junior, and each of these subdivisions distributed again among five classes, according to property solely. To the 350 centuries thus obtained, ten for each tribe, were added eighteen (or twelve) appropriated to the knights, next to the senators the wealthiest order in the state. In the assembly the vote of each century was of equal weight; and thus the votes of the first four classes, which were confined to men of property, immensely overbalanced those of the fifth, in which alone the poorer citizens were enrolled. The rise of the comitia of the tribes in political importance did little to redress this inequality; for though the distinction by classes did not prevail here, the censors had the power of eliminating the poorest citizens from every other tribe, and confining them to the four assigned to the city, which had each no more than an equal vote with the others, and were appointed to give their votes last. Hence every question was virtually settled in either comitia by the suffrages of the first and wealthiest voters. The poorer and more numerous were seldom called upon to exercise their votes at all; and Cicero, indeed, assures us that in the assembly of the centuries the first, or '*prærogativa*,' was always found to carry the decision. The vote of the first century was no doubt taken to be of good augury.

The functions of these two assemblies, thus essentially aristocratic, were twofold—elective and legislative. The centuries elected the consuls and prætors, and other principal or *curule* magistrates. The appointment to inferior offices was surrendered to the tribes. The power of making laws was claimed equally by both; and in this co-ordinate prerogative, exercised by two assemblies, each comprising the whole body of citizens, but under a different form and arrangement, consisted one of the most remarkable anomalies of the Roman

polity. If a consul, a prætor, or a dictator had an enactment to propose, he convened the centuries to deliberate upon it; if the measure were patronised by a tribune, it was submitted to the popular assembly of the tribes. In either case the law thus passed became binding upon the whole people; but no such law could be initiated by either the centuries or the tribes; every legislative measure must be first promulgated in the Senate, and receive the sanction of that paramount council of state. If a few instances occur of a tribune's proposing to the people a bill for conferring special honours, which the Senate had refused, they must be regarded as acts of irregular encroachment. It would seem, then, that the legislative power of the popular assemblies was that of sanction or rejection rather than of actual enactment.

The equestrian centuries comprised the wealthiest classes of the state. Such individuals among them as had attained to magistracies and offices, the exercise of which was generally unrewarded by salaries, and required, on the contrary, such an outlay for the amusement of the populace as rich men only could undertake, acquired the title of *nobiles*, together with an inchoate right of admission into the Senate. This illustrious order was opened to the public men who had served certain offices and borne their charges, but was limited to the number of 600. A high standard of property was enforced on all its members, and this was determined by the quinquennial valuation of estates by the censors, who had the power of revising the roll, striking off the poor and unworthy, and selecting the most distinguished personages to fill their vacancies. The nobles, having once attained the distinction of admission, or merely of eligibility to the Senate, strained every nerve to maintain this position for themselves and their families, and to keep out from it their inferiors of the equestrian order, who were striving with equal energy to attain to it; and though a place in the Senate was not hereditary, the sons of senators might commonly expect to be nominated successively to their fathers' places. Hence arose the political conflict of the Senate and the knights, which colours throughout the later history of the free-state. The Senate, as the party of the richest and noblest, assumes sometimes the name, as it succeeds to the political character of the patricians; while the knights, with the names of liberty and equality in their mouths, naturally connect themselves for the most part with the inferior and poorer classes, and occupy the place of the plebeians. But if these old names still occur sometimes in the history of constitutional struggles, it must be

remembered how far they have really diverged from their original significance.

The struggle for admission to the Senate affected most directly the interests of the competitors. The Senate was the fountain of Roman legislation. The Senate regulated the administration of the provinces, organised the finances of the commonwealth, determined questions of peace and war, and treated with the envoys of foreign potentates. The Senate was thus the executive also of the Roman republic; and to the Senate, rather than to the people, every magistrate at home and abroad was responsible. If its power was limited by the right of *intercession* or veto of the tribunes, it possessed means of counteracting their opposition by sowing dissension among them and playing off one against another, or, in the last resort, by creating a dictator with arbitrary powers for the protection of the state. The commons frequently complained, and probably with justice, that the pretence of danger from abroad was falsely urged when a dictator was really required to overrule opposition from within. But when the Senate found that the tribunes were manageable without recurring to this unpalatable expedient, it ceased to invoke the strong hand of the dictator. On more than one occasion it attained the same end less offensively by investing the consuls with irresponsible authority to protect the commonwealth. Such a decree, known by the formula, *Viderent consules ne aliquid detrimenti res publica caperet*, was well entitled a *Senatus consultum ultimum*. Against even this, however, the people had one defensive weapon in store. No citizen could be sentenced *capitally*, that is, to the loss either of life or of civil status, without an appeal to the people, or permission to withdraw himself therefrom by voluntary exile. If the consuls, under whatever authority, violated this constitutional provision, they were themselves liable to sentence at the hands of the comitia of the tribes. The opposing pretensions of the Senate and the people on this head were never definitively settled, and came more than once into violent collision.

Besides their authority, their influence, and their honourable distinction, the senators enjoyed a monopoly of the most lucrative government appointments. The missions of proconsuls and pro-prætors, with their inferior officers, were gilded, not indeed, with fixed salaries, but by gifts from states and potentates, and opportunities, hardly to be resisted, of touching bribes, and peculation. When the rich fields of Greece and Asia were opened to their cupidity the

nobles abandoned usury at home and commerce abroad to more vulgar capitalists, and devoted themselves to the administration of the provinces. They allowed the knights a large share in the occupation of the most fertile domain-land, and confined the poorer classes to the common pastures. When the murmurs of the indigent multitude threatened danger to their privileges they invented the fatal scheme of satisfying it by a cheap or gratuitous distribution of food. The corn-growing provinces of Sicily and Africa were mulcted in an annual tribute of grain; and while the hunger of the populace was thus appeased, its passion for amusement was at the same time pampered by shows in the theatre and circus, provided by the chief magistrates. The exhibition of these shows was found to be a sure road to popularity, and candidates for office vied with one another in thus invoking the favour of the tribes by an ever-increasing profusion. The cost of proceeding through the regular course of honours, of buying the suffrages of the people by shows and largesses, and eventually by direct bribes, for the quæstorship, the ædileship, the prætorship, and the consulship, advanced almost year by year, and by the time that the aspirant had reached the summit of his ambition he had impoverished himself, and at the same time placed himself under such obligations to his supporters, that it was only by the unscrupulous exercise of his advantages in a province that he could hope for indemnification. So it was that the provinces ultimately paid for the voluptuous idleness of the Roman people.

But meanwhile the jealous knights, debarred from these guilty gratifications, kept watch over the conduct of the provincial rulers, and invoked against them the retribution of the laws. Murder, bribery, peculation, and corrupt administration of justice were public crimes, the cognisance of which was reserved to the assembly of the tribes, and this assembly was not indisposed to judge severely the crimes of the nobles and the monopolists. The Senate contrived, with admirable dexterity, to escape from this
U.C. 605.
B.C. 149. hostile judicature by the appointments of the *quæstiones perpetuæ*, or permanent tribunals, composed solely of members of their own order, for the trial of this class of offences. They turned the flank of the knights, and laughed in the face of the people. The knights gradually recovered from their confusion, faced about, and now addressed all their efforts to obtain a share at least in the administration of justice, and so use it as to bring the Senate to terms on the ulterior question of the provincial governments.

CHAPTER XXVII.

State of religion at this period and progress of disbelief in the national system—The study of the Greek language and literature—Early histories of Rome written by the Grecian freedmen of the noble houses—Ennius an imitator of Homer—Influence of the Grecian women—Depravation of morals—Divorces—Bacchanalian mysteries—The Romans adopt the forms and rhythms of Greek composition—Further change of manners in the direction of Greek models—First symptoms of a tendency towards monarchy—Resistance to foreign corruption by Cato the Censor.

WE will turn now from the state of party politics in the city to take a glance at the ideas and manners of the Roman people at this critical period in their history, when the occasional and casual relations they had hitherto entertained with Greece had become fixed and constant, and rapidly increased in close and reciprocal influence. On the side of Rome, with which we are here concerned, this influence is conspicuously apparent in the shape which the old mythology of Italy began now to assume, in the disappearance of many ancient national divinities, and the introduction of Hellenic deities in their place. The Sabine names of Consus, Lunus, Juturna, Feronia, and others become lost altogether, or merged in those of foreign divinities, whose attributes are supposed to resemble them. Apollo, first honoured with a temple at Rome, A.U.C. 321, advances in estimation among the citizens, and obtains the distinction of public games in his honour in the year A.B.C. 212. U.C. 542.
B.C. 212. Æsculapius is evoked from Epidaurus by a decree of the Senate in 291; Cybele, or, as the Romans call her, Bona Dea, is U.C. 463.
U.C. 549. invited to Rome in 205. The introduction of the Bacchanalia, or mysteries of the Grecian Dionysus, caused so much disturbance or jealousy, that the Senate in 186 issued a decree for their suppression throughout Italy. U.C. 568. But the sceptical philosophers of Greece followed quickly in the train of her religious ceremonies. The extravagances of belief went, as usual, hand in hand with scepticism. The poet Ennius introduced the rational explanations of the ancient mythology recommended to his own countrymen by the Greek Evemerus; and from rationalism the step was easy to doubt, and finally to disbelief altogether. The magistrates of Rome maintained the ceremonial of processions, sacrifices, and auguries, as an engine of state-policy; but the higher classes almost wholly renounced their fathers' faith in them, and had little scruple in

openly deriding them. From the time, indeed, that the plebeians had been admitted to the priesthood and augurships, the nobility of Rome had slackened in their zeal for the maintenance of the old traditions. The Potitii abandoned to their slaves the cult of their patron Hercules. Marcellus threw into the sea the sacred fowls which refused to present him with favourable omens. The common sceptical disposition of the day is represented by the expression of its most popular writer, Ennius: 'If there be gods at all, at least they do not concern themselves with the care of human affairs.'

At this period the Roman nobles began to make use of the Greek language, and got themselves instructed in it by slaves or clients of Greek extraction. They employed Greek writers to compose their own history for them. Diocles of Peparethus was the first who compiled a narrative of the foundation of the city. The freedmen, to whom was now naturally assigned the task of celebrating the exploits of their patrons' families, were doubtless prompt to embellish them. Hence the rage, already noticed, for discovering a Greek extraction, or a Trojan, which was reputed not less honourable, for the Roman gentes. Æneas and Hercules, with their sons and comrades, were made to serve as founders for many patrician houses. As soon as the Romans set foot in Phrygia they recognised their pretended connexion with the restored city of Ilium. The Scipios and other magnates paid court to Grecian poets and historians, and received the incense of their flattery in return. Ennius, the first of the Roman poets, a native of Calabria, who pretended himself to a Grecian origin, and was equally versed in the Greek and Latin tongues, introduced the works of Homer to the Italians by imitation and translation, and was long held by his grateful countrymen as a worthy rival of the father of epic verse. Instruction in the Greek language and literature became, under the name of Grammar, the most essential part of a liberal education, and every Roman mansion employed its Grecian pedagogue to train the children of the family in this necessary lore. The Greek women, fascinating and accomplished, completed the subjugation of the Roman conquerors. The rough and homely matrons of Sabellia could no longer retain the hearts of their spouses, ensnared during a long absence by the wiles of these foreign mistresses. The injured women were not slow in avenging themselves. The first divorce at Rome had taken place in the year of the city 520. About half a century later occurred the scandal of the Bacchanalian mysteries, at which many hundreds

of Roman matrons are reputed to have devoted themselves to orgies of the grossest licentiousness.

But the invasion of Grecian manners became conspicuous in every department of life. The petty narrowness of the old Roman culture was enlarged in its laws and social institutions. The strict Roman conceptions of marriage and property yielded in many important particulars to a wider and more generous philosophy. But what the Roman principles gained in breadth they lost no doubt in intensity. The cultivation of the ideas of Greece, of her arts and sciences, her moral and intellectual interests, transformed the children of Quirinus into mere cosmopolitans. The Romans abandoned their old Saturnian verse, the native utterance of their sentiment and passion, and deigned to bind themselves in the trammels of the Greek hexameter. At this foreign metre they laboured diligently and without repining for more than a century, and in the end created a poetical rhythm and diction hardly if at all inferior to that of their masters, which deserves to be accounted one of the most extraordinary phenomena in all literary history. But they sacrificed no doubt both the spirit and the form of the old Italian inspiration, and we know not how much the national genius may have suffered in consequence. They were hardly less successful in naturalising the Grecian drama. Enough of the plays of Plautus and Terence survives to show how well they learnt to move in the fetters of the Greek Comic Muse; and the names of Livius Andronicus, of Cæcilius, of Attius and Pacuvius attest, with others, the abundance of this dramatic literature, which we can more complacently admire, inasmuch as it did not supplant any genuine Roman growth of an earlier epoch.

If we take a further glance at the manners and customs of the Romans at this period, we may observe how the life of the city becomes distinguished from that of the country, and that of the Campanian baths from both the one and the other. The first was the life of the forum and the temples; the stated performance of civil and religious acts; the formal reception of freedmen and giving of legal opinions to clients in the morning; public business in the forum or Senate-house towards noon; preparation for public speaking with hired rhetoricians; retirement for sleep at mid-day; the exercises of the Campus Martius, swimming, wrestling, and fencing in the afternoon; the supper diversified with singing and buffoonery; and so to bed at sundown. In the country there was the superintendence of the farm and household;

hunting, fishing, and other field-sports; the employment of leisure-hours in reading, writing, or dictating, generally on a couch, or even in bed; sleeping much in the day, but rising again with the first break of morning. At the baths there was a complete holiday from all duties, public or domestic; throwing off of the toga, going barefoot and lightly clad in a Grecian dressing-gown; lounging through the day, gossiping with idle acquaintances, indulging in long and repeated ablutions, invoking the aid of foreign artists in song and music to wile away the hours of vacant indolence. While, indeed, the Roman was equally proud of the austere discipline of the city and the country, he was ashamed of his recreations at the seaside, and regarded it as an indulgence akin to vice to relax even for a moment from the stern routine of self-imposed duty. But the siren Sloth was gradually gaining his ear, and every further step that he took into the realms of Grecian luxury estranged him more and more from the love of business which he had embraced as a passion, and made his second nature. The domestic morality of the Romans was thus undermined in many of its dearest relations, when a guilty ambition began first to prompt them to seek in the conduct of public affairs a personal and selfish aggrandisement.

At this period, indeed, the high civil position maintained by a narrow oligarchy of noble families closely connected by inter-marriage, which shared among themselves all the great offices of the commonwealth, might naturally foster such irregular aspirations, and point to the establishment of a monarchy, limited by the mutual jealousies of its aristocratic assessors, in place of a republic which was democratic only in name. To the elder Scipio Africanus the people, as we have seen, would, in the exuberance of its gratitude, have offered a consulship for life. He declined an honour which would have made him a king or a doge, and might have transformed the commonwealth into a constitutional hereditary monarchy. Had the nobles been left to work out their own career, it is not impossible that this is a phase of government through which it might have passed, in which perhaps it might have long continued. But their course was rudely intercepted by the torrent of national corruption and military vices which soon broke down every moral barrier. A reaction against them was engendered in the minds of the people; leaders were not wanting, some honestly, some of evil design, to inflame the hostility of the masses. When Cato 'the Censor,' a rude but vigorous scion of the Latian homesteads, took

on him to rebuke their abandonment of the national traditions, he found the people well-disposed to cheer him onwards. The poet Nævius, the first of the Roman satirists, had met with popular sympathy in his gibes against the haughty Scipios and Metelli; he had been exiled through their influence to Africa; but the spirit of criticism and raillery survived his fall. Cato served the state in war and in peace, and was wafted through the career of honours to the consulship, and even to the censorship, from which he derived the title by which he is distinguished in history. In every place, and on all occasions, he rebuked the pride of the nobles and abated their insolence. He caused their chiefs to be cited before the popular assembly; but they had yet authority enough to repel the charges against them by such haughty language as that of Æmilius Scaurus: 'Varus accuses Æmilius of corruption; Æmilius denies it: Romans, which do you believe?' The story of the charges against Africanus, and his indignant rebuke of them, of his final retirement from Rome, and forbidding his body to be buried there, has been already recorded; but it was under Cato's influence that these indignities were heaped upon him, and the aristocracy humiliated in his person.

Of Cato, indeed, Livy has said, in the remarkable passage in which he has summed up his character, that, much as he harassed the nobles, they were not slower or less persistent in their attacks upon him. The long public career of this illustrious Roman was a constant struggle with the public enemies of the state abroad, and with the factions and the fashions of his own countrymen at home. He is commonly cited as a typical representative of the old Roman character, as it existed in the age of liberty and progress, before it was corrupted by foreign vices, and enervated by success and indulgence. Harsh it undoubtedly was, punctilious and censorious; according to modern notions grossly unjust and cruel; in no relation of life did Cato and the Romans of Cato's type allow any place to the common feelings of humanity when apparently opposed to the stern sense of duty, the duty of advancing the interests of the state, of the farm, and of the household. Such men were equally severe in their treatment of their enemies, of their women, of their slaves, and of their cattle. In most, however, of the Romans whose characters are open to us there may be traced a certain effusion of sentiment and emotion, which relieves while it contrasts with their general lines of hardship and barbarity. In Cato we meet with no such milder symptoms: if he ever relaxed at all it was only into a

jest more or less grim in its character. But when he counselled the dismissal of the Greek philosophers from Rome, lest they should corrupt the people, it is remarked to his credit that he desired that their application should at least be answered courteously. With all his dislike for Grecian manners, he saw at last the necessity of yielding to the current so far as to learn the language of Greece even in his latest years; and it should be observed that, even in the mild and polished age of the great historian, Livy has no word to say against him for any excess in rudeness or ferocity.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Tiberius Gracchus observes the growing depopulation of Italy, and conceives the project of raising the condition of the Roman commonalty—As tribune of the people he proposes a distribution of lands—Resistance of the Senate and nobles—Tiberius slain in a riot.—(B.C. 133.)

POPULAR story loves to trace the origin of great political movements to casual incidents, and thus the agitation of the agrarian laws by the Gracchi, one of the most signal events in the history of the republic, was first, it is said, excited by the reflections which arose on a particular occasion in the mind of the young Tiberius Gracchus. This scion of the noble but plebeian house of the Sempronii was traversing Etruria in the year 137, on his route to join the armies of Rome before Numantia. His way lay through many famous cities, once the centres of arts and civilisation, now reduced to a mean condition in the general downfall of their country. The nobles of the conquered province had either perished utterly or had hidden themselves among the medley of races which formed the mixed population of Rome and other still flourishing cities of her empire. If a remnant still inhabited the mansions of their ancestors, they had ceased to be popular chieftains, and had resigned themselves to obscure luxury as the masters of a swarm of slaves. Great portions of their territory had undergone confiscation. Roman colonies had been planted and amply endowed with lands among them. Large tracts, however, had been removed from the public domain, which were meant for distribution among the Roman people, as occasion might require, while in the meantime they might relieve the state of a part of her burdens by the levy of a small rentcharge upon the tenants or leaseholders to whom she

should assign them. This land-tax, indeed, had been remitted, as we have seen, to the whole soil of Italy since the conquest of Macedonia, and the tenants of the state had become exempt from the payment of any rent whatsoever. The distinction between the quiritary land, conceded to the Roman citizen in possession, and the national domain which he was permitted thus to occupy has been explained already. The question of the rights of possession and occupation, on which the agrarian legislation of the republic was founded, had been brought prominently forward at an earlier period. It will suffice to remind the reader that, after much agitation, it was at last peremptorily decided by the law of Licinius, that possession of land should be limited to a certain amount, and the right of occupation be always revocable by the state, with a view to the assignment of land in property to her poorer citizens, and especially to the colonies she should plant, whenever public policy demanded. From time to time such assignments had no doubt been made, but the colonies had perhaps in all cases been endowed with lands newly conquered rather than with such as were already in the nominal possession of the state. The splendid estates of the nobles, which had for generations descended from father to son as regularly as if they had been actually freeholds, had come to be regarded as their own indefeasibly. Scattered far and wide over the face of Italy, they were seldom visited by the real proprietors who claimed their produce. The Roman magnate, living in profuse magnificence in the city, or at some choice villa in the hills or on the coast, abandoned their cultivation to slaves under the management of an agent, himself a slave also. But slave-labour, though vainly supposed to be cheap, was proved to be really dear labour. It was found to be dangerous as well as costly. The employment of slaves was curtailed and their number reduced. Rome and the great cities could be supplied with corn from abroad. Extensive tracts of Italian soil were transferred from tillage to pasture. A few mounted shepherds could keep watch over large droves of cattle in the plains, while swine were allowed to run almost wild in the forests. Here and there a solitary herdsman might be seen with his staff or pike to scare the wolves and boars in the mountains; but in seasons of alarm from the servile population even these wretched weapons were forbidden him. If Tiberius paused on his way to address these people, he found, with disgust, that they were foreigners of strange features and barbarous idiom, Thracians, Africans, or Iberians; and from town to town these seemed to be the only inhabitants of the land.

He remembered the mighty armies which Etruria had sent first against Rome herself, and afterwards against the enemies of Rome ; and he asked himself had these myriads sunk into the earth and left no descendants behind them ? If the Etrurians had perished, what at least had become of their conquerors ?

Tiberius was the elder son of a Sempronius Gracchus, who had been censor and twice consul, and had twice enjoyed the distinction of a triumph ; his mother was a Cornelia, the daughter of the elder Scipio Africanus, the conqueror of Hannibal. Though thus highly born, the youth had been bred to espouse the interests of the commons, still constantly engaged in the struggle for property and privilege with the nobles. After his father's death his mother had educated him in letters and eloquence, and caused him to be imbued with the liberal Grecian learning. He was much impressed with the spectacle he had witnessed, and drew from it profound political conclusions. But he continued his route into Spain. He there acted as quæstor to the proconsul Mancinus ; amidst his leader's reverses he acquired military experience, and obtained some distinction. At last his address, coupled with the confidence with which he had inspired the enemy, enabled him to effect a treaty at a critical moment, and rescue 20,000 Romans from death or captivity. The republic, indeed, refused to ratify the agreement, as unauthorised and dishonourable ; but while with antique severity she gave up to the Numantians the general whose convention she disowned, she heaped rewards upon his subordinate, already a favourite with the people, for the dexterity with which he had done her so good a service.

The young quæstor returned to Rome, not forgetful of what he had observed in his journey through Etruria. He extended his experience by inquiry, and soon learnt that the melancholy condition of that district was common to it with the greater part of Italy. Almost everywhere the old nobility had hidden their heads in the cities, and abandoned the country to a progressive depopulation. Vast estates had fallen into the hands of the wealthy few, who had chased the free cultivators from the soil, and transferred it to scanty bands of captive labourers. The disasters of the Roman arms in Spain had at the same time revealed to him the actual weakness of the military power, which provoked hostilities simultaneously on every frontier of its wide-spread dominions. There was a time, as he might have read, when Italy could arm 700,000 foot-soldiers and mount 70,000 cavaliers, all freemen, all trained warriors ; but now,

if another Pyrrhus or Hannibal should attack her, where were the resources of Italy to resist him? Should the Italian tribes themselves rise against their mistress, by what force could they be controlled? What power was there at Rome to repel the assault of an imperator who should dare to march her own legions against her? To the ardent imagination of the young enthusiast the vaunted energy of the conquering city seemed already to be no more than *nominis umbra*, the unsubstantial shadow of her ancient glory.

True it is that the pictures which the Romans themselves drew, even at a later period, of the decline of population in the peninsula were much exaggerated. The people had been displaced rather than destroyed. Numbers had emigrated from the fields into the cities; still greater numbers, perhaps, if they had quitted Italy had settled themselves in the provinces, and contributed to circulate the lifeblood of Italy throughout the empire. If the legions ceased to be recruited from Italy herself, they were still replenished from the mass of the Italians and Romans who constituted the ruling race in Greece and Africa and Asia Minor. The casual observations we are apt to make on the movement of population are commonly delusive when we are destitute of actual enumeration to guide and check us. It must, however, be admitted that a tremendous change was actually taking place at this time in the occupation of Italy, although this may be traced partly to natural causes, which no political action could have effectively controlled. It was common at the same period to other countries very differently circumstanced. The poverty of Greece experienced it perhaps as much as the wealth of Italy. These two peninsulas, which project so deeply into the Mediterranean, had both been famous at an earlier period for their crops of grain, and the dense population they nourished at the foot of their rugged mountains. But that was a time when both these regions were divided into numerous petty states, and occupations of land were necessarily small. Both, however, were peculiarly adapted to the nurture of cattle. They abounded in cool pastures among the mountains for the summer, and warmer tracts of level land for the winter. As soon as political restrictions were shaken off properties became enlarged, and embraced tracts of both hill and plain together. Then first these countries began to reap the fruits of their natural capabilities. Proprietors found it their interest to breed cattle in greater numbers, and to reduce in the same proportion their cultivation of grain. An attempt to check by legislation the course

of this natural process could hardly fail to be attended with disastrous consequences.

The problem, indeed, admitted of no peaceable solution. To restrain the free cultivation of Italy by the assignment of lands to a few thousand free proprietors was a chimera. To leave the soil to the cultivation of slaves was to perpetuate and intensify a plague-spot which could not fail to issue in the corruption of the whole body. But the emancipation of the servile caste and the abolition of slavery were ideas entirely beyond the scope of the political reasoning of the ancients. Plato and Aristotle had attempted to defend the principle of slavery, but since their time it had been thought better to accept it as a fact and a necessity, but make no pretence of justifying it. The outbreak of the slaves in Sicily at this moment might serve to enhance the anxiety of Tiberius Gracchus, but the mass of his countrymen drew from it no political lesson whatever. They regarded their slaves as their actual enemies hardly less than the Gauls or the Carthaginians, and they resented their revolt and nerved themselves to repress it with the same determination with which they would have asserted their empire against the attack of a foreign invader. Often, indeed, had the Roman master been thus attacked by the slaves of his own household. The law had armed him with full authority to control and punish them, and this authority he still maintained by ever-increasing severity. But the revolt of Eunus, in Sicily, was a rebellion on a national scale. Throughout the whole of the island the slaves rose by hundreds of thousands. Among them there were men of intelligence and education as well as of active bravery; but the pretensions which their leader made to magical powers seem to show that he depended more on the energy of brutal fanaticism than on the higher qualities of civilised men. The policy of the Roman masters had always been to deprive their slaves of the means of concert among themselves, and they were now successful on a large scale, as they had so constantly been on a smaller. The insurgents gained, indeed, some victories over the generals who were first sent to repress them, but they were unable to maintain a campaign against practised troops and leaders. After a year of desolating riots the revolt was finally put down; the decimated slaves were reduced to a condition worse, perhaps, than before, and things went on in their accustomed course of suffering on one side and insecurity on the other.

But Tiberius regarded the policy of his countrymen from another point of view also. His aims for the elevation of the lower class

of citizens, by giving them the status of landed proprietors, embraced at the same time the depression of the magnates of the aristocracy. He observed the gulf that was ever widening between the two classes of the nobles and the commons: the one constantly enriched by the appropriation of political office, which was the surest road to wealth; the other kept in poverty and idleness by the contempt which as a nation of warriors it felt, and was encouraged to feel, for the lucrative pursuits of commercial enterprise. The nobles, who for the sake of their own monopoly encouraged and pandered to this prejudice, were content to nourish it by a stream of perpetual largesses, which the people mistook for generous liberality. Here again the young reformer mistook the real character of the evil he wished to counteract. He might be shocked to hear the calculation made that the mass of free citizens amounted to 400,000, while of all this number not more than 2,000 could be designated as men of property—as, at least, was asserted some years later—but it could have been of little avail to confer small portions of land upon 20,000 more. The evil would have soon recurred with unabated virulence. He should have aimed at opening the career of honours to a larger number of citizens, and of honourable commerce to all. The first of these courses was urged and, indeed, effected by the demagogues who succeeded him; the latter was ultimately brought into play by the force of circumstances, and the elevation of the knights and the publicans in the social scale, which resulted from the one and the other, was, in fact, the most beneficial revolution in the history of Rome. But the time was not yet come. The aristocracy was now all-powerful, and it was inspired with a vigorous determination to remain so.

There were two roads at Rome to honour and influence. The one lay through the ordinary course of the public magistracies, for which any citizen, indeed, was competent to sue, though none but men of birth and connexions had ordinarily a chance of success. With these advantages Tiberius was richly endowed. He had reached the age when he might seek and enjoy the quæstorship; the next step would make him ædile; from thence he might in due time attain the prætorship; and lastly, but not before his forty-third year, the consulship. In the course of such a career many opportunities might occur for introducing salutary measures of reform. But it was a slow career; its success might be precarious. Tiberius was impatient. As a plebeian he was eligible at once to the tribuneship, which would give him power equal in some respects to the consul-

ship itself, for it would enable him both to propose the most important measures himself, and by his single veto to frustrate the measures of his opponents in the highest magistracies. Further, it would confer upon him personal inviolability, a security much needed in the violent struggles which in violent hands it was calculated to provoke. Tiberius sued for the tribuneship, and the people, already aware of the ends he had in view, elected him with acclamation, and encouraged him to pursue them, and recover the public land for the poor citizens.

The young reformer immediately proposed the revival of the Licinian law, limiting the possession of public domain to the extent of U.C. 621.
B.C. 133. 500 jugera. He allowed, indeed, a certain additional assignment to proprietors who had children, and he devised some measure for the indemnification of those who were to be at once deprived of their actual occupations. The enactment was no doubt within the terms of the existing law, and from the strictly legal point of view might seem even moderate and indulgent; but as a measure of practical justice it must fairly be regarded as harsh and illiberal, while its expediency was even more questionable, for it plainly could not be carried against the prejudices and interests of the great landholders without a violent revolution. Long and fierce were the debates that ensued; but the question could not fail to be removed from the region of debate, and the voice of reason became drowned in the clamour of the populace. Then the Senate resorted to the means it had of defeating an obnoxious tribune by securing the veto of one of his colleagues. A tribune named Octavius was prevailed upon thus to interfere. Tiberius was roused to fury, and obtained from the assembly of the tribes the expulsion of his opponent from office. A riot ensued, in which Octavius was wounded as well as defeated. Tiberius himself, with his brother Caius and his father-in-law Appius Claudius, were nominated triumvirs for carrying his measure, the *lex Sempronia*, into effect.

This commission, however, proved disastrous to the cause. The young tribune had, perhaps, been too moderate in his proposed enactment. A simpler and more arbitrary measure would have been easier to carry into execution. The provisions for compensation were complicated, and required time and patience. The nobles took advantage of the delay, and had recourse to the old artifice, which had succeeded against a Cassius, a Manlius, and a Mælius, of instilling into the minds of the people a prejudice against their champion. They insinuated that he had accepted a diadem and purple robe as

presents from foreign emissaries, and they drove him in return to strengthen himself by the lavish distribution among the people of the treasures bequeathed to the state by Attalus, king of Pergamus. The decree for this purpose, proposed by a tribune and carried by the tribes, was a glaring encroachment upon the legal prerogative of the Senate. Again the nobles retaliated; again Tiberius joined issue with them. He proposed to admit the knights to a place in the tribunals with the senators. The privilege of presiding at political trials was highly valued and coveted. It gave influence; perhaps it led to the attainment of still more tangible advantages. It conferred authority over the lives and fortunes of the highest servants of the state, if impeached by the agents of faction; and doubtless it became, in the growing corruption of the times, an instrument for the extortion of pecuniary payments. Whether or no the knights should sit in the *Judicia* became from this time forth one of the urgent questions of the age.

Time went on; the tribune must vacate his office in due season, and then his person would be no longer protected. It was necessary for him to obtain a renewal of his term. He demanded re-election for the following year. The nobles exclaimed that the re-election would be illegal. Tumults again ensued. The partisans of Tiberius were broken in force; many of them were engaged with their harvests in the country. Amidst the confusion Tiberius called on his friends to help him, and raised, it was said, his hand to his head to guard it from blow or menace. 'He demands the diadem,' exclaimed his opponents. Scipio Nasica, a chief of the nobles, the foremost man of the time, urged the consul Seævola to slay the tyrant, as the patriot consuls had done before him. When he hesitated Scipio himself leapt forward, throwing the skirt of his toga over his head, as one about to perform an act of sacrifice, and called on the citizens to avenge themselves upon the traitor. A conflict ensued, in which some lives were lost by blows, some by falling over the edge of the Tarpeian rock; for the tumult had been shifted from the comitia to the Capitol. Tiberius sought refuge in the temple of Jupiter, but the doors were closed against him by the priests. He stumbled over a dead body, and before he could recover himself was struck with a club by Saturninus, one of his own treacherous colleagues in the tribuneship. Thus assailed he was soon dispatched, and as many as three hundred of his partisans perished in the fray. Their corpses were dragged ignominiously to the Tiber and cast into the stream. This was the first blood shed in the civil

disturbances of the republic. It was but the beginning of bloodshed and of the wars of citizen against citizen which distracted her during the century that still intervened before she could be transformed into an empire.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Scipio Æmilianus defends the interests of the nobles against the claims of the commons—The Italian states seek to force themselves into the privileges of the Roman aristocracy, and choose Scipio as their champion—His mysterious death—The commons undertake the cause of the Italians—Caius Gracchus, tribune of the people, advocates an agrarian law, and other measures in the interest of the commons—He founds colonies at Capua, Tarentum, and Carthage—The Senate arms the consul Opimius with extraordinary powers, and he is overthrown and slain.—(B.C. 130–121.)

THE nobles had effected the destruction of their enemy, and had cast a slur upon his memory. To this slander, indeed, the people might attach little importance; but their views were baffled by the inherent difficulties of the measure which their champion had effected. Appius Claudius died about this time, and the places of the deceased triumvirs were supplied by M. Fulvius Flaccus, and C. Papirius Carbo. The attempts they still made to put the new law in force served only to increase their embarrassments. Every partition they proposed was parried by excuses and evasions. The occupiers resisted, documents were lost, limitations were contested. The tribunes, some hostile, others lukewarm, gave no aid to the perplexed managers; the Senate covertly undermined their authority while the attention of the people was studiously diverted to other objects. The *lex Sempronia* remained after all almost wholly inoperative.

At this conjuncture Scipio Æmilianus returned victorious from Numantia. He was the son of L. Æmilius Paulus, and was adopted by Scipio, from whom he inherited also the title of Africanus. His exploits and the brilliancy of his name and origin, nor less his reputation for discretion and virtue, might point him out as the fittest umpire between the rival factions of the city. But he was himself an eminent member of the dominant oligarchy, and it was reported of him that on hearing of the death of the demagogue, his own brother-in-law, he had not scrupled to exclaim, in the language of Homer, '*So perish all who do the like again!*' Nevertheless, whatever his views and prejudices, he was moderate in action. He

contented himself with measures of obstruction and delay, till the breaking out of war with the Illyrians gave pretext for suspending the further execution of the law.

The nobles, indeed, had found support where they might have least expected it,—in the subject states of Italy, which Rome had dignified with the name of allies of the republic. It had been their policy to place the affairs of these states under the control of the aristocratic party in each, and had extended to their nobles a share in their own social prerogatives. The chiefs of Samnium and Campania were almost as much interested in the abuse of the agrarian laws as the Roman optimates themselves. At the same time they had viewed with intense disgust the elevation of the clients and freedmen of the Romans to the status of citizens of the sovereign republic, while they were themselves kept at a distance, nor suffered to have a voice in the election of her magistrates. They rejoiced in the contempt which even the discreet and moderate Scipio evinced for the rabble of the Roman forum, when he exclaimed, on finding himself interrupted by their clamour, ‘Silence, ye bastard Romans! think ye that I regard the cries of citizens whom I myself brought captives into Italy?’ The wealthy Italians feared the result of new agrarian distributions; they hated the wretched hordes who banded themselves with the race of their actual conquerors, and now sought to recover the estates which had been taken from them. They sought rather to obtain the citizenship themselves for the means of advancement it held out; and they chose Scipio as their patron with the deliberate view of forcing themselves into the Roman state.

Scipio had been twice consul; now, when the name of dictator was pronounced by the classes which demanded rest from unceasing agitation, no man could stand in competition with the conqueror of Numantia. Caius, the brother of Tiberius Gracchus, retorted upon him with the cry of *a tyrant!* but Scipio replied calmly, ‘The enemies of Rome may well wish me dead, for they know that while I live Rome cannot perish.’ Scipio was, indeed, about to die, and genuine freedom was destined not long to survive him. He had retired to his chamber to meditate a discourse which he was to pronounce on the morrow before the people; on the morrow he was found dead in his bed. No wound, it was asserted, appeared on the body; his slaves, however, affirmed that the house had been entered at night and a murder perpetrated by persons unknown to them. Suspicion fell sometimes on Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi;

and again on Sempronia, the wife of Scipio himself, who was supposed to have private motives of enmity, but the Senate
U.C. 625.
B.C. 129. declined to prosecute the inquiry, and to the Senate the odium was generally attached by the classes which sought to blacken its reputation and beat down its influence.

The Italians were struck with consternation. They had been silently working their way to their cherished object, the franchise of the city. Perperna, a distinguished captain among them, had scaled the heights of the Roman constitution. By serving a magistracy in his own city he had acquired the Latin right; from thence he had ascended to the Roman, and lastly he had been elected consul. But the death of Scipio encouraged the Senate to proscribe the claims of these ambitious subjects. They even decreed the expulsion of them from the city.

Hereupon the leaders of the popular party stepped forward and made common cause with the Italians, and this was the beginning of the long struggle which eventually raised the provinces, through a series of civil wars, to the level of Rome herself. Caius Gracchus, with politic boldness, offered himself as their patron. Fulvius seconded him, and, being elected consul, introduced sundry measures for their advantage. The Senate resisted, and contrived to get the consul removed to the command of an army, and Caius to an official post in Sardinia. The Italians were exasperated at their disappointment. The little commonwealth of Fregellæ rashly flew to
U.C. 629.
B.C. 125. arms. The nobles wanted nothing better. They promptly put down the revolt, and inflicted a chastisement upon the rebels which daunted the spirit of the Italians for another generation.

The nobles were not disposed to lose their opportunity. Failing to connect any other Italian states with this abortive insurrection, they turned upon Caius as its prime mover, and caused him to be impeached. But in this they went too far. The impeachment failed, and Caius was elected tribune, and urged all the more strongly to carry his brother's plans into effect. Tiberius, indeed, was simply devoted to improving, as best he might, the condition of the poorer citizens. Caius aimed at a reconstruction of the national polity. His mother Cornelia, dismayed at the loss of one of her sons, urged him to abstain from so perilous an enterprise. But his was not the simple character of his brother. His patriotism was not unalloyed with personal motives of ambition and revenge, and he pledged himself without reserve to the cause of revolution.

His first object, in conformity with the common practice of the Roman politicians, was to terrify his opponents by attacks upon individuals. He threatened Octavius with proscription from office, and Popilius, who had been active in the prosecution of his brother's adherents, with impeachment. Popilius dared not confront his accuser before the tribunal of the commons, and withdrew, as the only course left him, into voluntary exile. This done, Caius proceeded to confirm by repeated edicts the principle of his brother's agrarian law, though he advanced no nearer to its practical execution. Caius Gracchus is said to have been the first who appointed a regular distribution of corn among the poorer citizens, though he was not the first, as we have seen, to introduce a practice which could not fail to become fixed and constant. He established customs' duties to be levied on various important articles of luxury; he decreed the gratuitous supply of clothing to the soldiers, who had hitherto provided for themselves; he founded colonies for the immediate relief of citizens who were waiting in vain for the promised assignment of lands; and he caused the poor to be employed on public works, in the making of roads and bridges. All these measures were to be carried by the votes of the people, and all required to be recommended by the eloquence of the proposer. But the speeches of the great tribune were distinguished not only by their eloquence, but by an innovation of peculiar significance. Hitherto the speakers in the forum were wont to look towards the portion of the open space called the comitium, which was occupied by the patrician curies; but Caius Gracchus turned and addressed himself to the mass of the citizens behind the rostra, a practice which from thenceforth became regular. By these innovations he laid a wide basis of popularity. The people hailed them as tokens of good things to come, and assured him of their support. Various enactments followed which trenched more or less upon the prerogatives of birth and wealth. But a more serious change was that by which the knights were admitted partially, if not, as some suppose, exclusively, to the judicial appointments of the state. In a republic, it has been observed, the judicial prerogative is the most important of all public functions. If it fall into the hands of a class or party it becomes inevitably an instrument of persecution and aggrandisement. As long as the senators were the judges the provincial governors, who were themselves senators, were secure from the consequences of impeachment. If the knights were to take their place, it might be expected that the *Publicani*, the farmers of the revenues

abroad, who were generally of that class, would be not less assured of impunity in malversation. But at this moment the provinces were exclaiming—now for the first time we hear their voices, which will be heard again and again, and louder and louder—exclaiming against the tyranny of the proconsuls, and soliciting justice against them. The tribune took advantage of the cry which resounded through the city, and effected a sudden and fundamental change in the *Judicia*, by installing the knights in the tribunals.

It was vain, indeed, to expect greater purity from the second order of citizens than from the first. If the senators openly denied justice to complainants, the knights almost as openly sold it. Nor was this the only evil of the tribune's reform. It arrayed the two privileged classes of the state in direct hostility one to the other. 'Caius made the republic double-headed,' was the keen remark of antiquity; but in fact the powers of the Roman state, the consuls and the tribunes, the Senate and the people, were always arrayed with co-ordinate powers one against the other, and Caius only introduced a fresh element of discord where there existed already others which could never long be held in equilibrium together. The contest, however, between the senators and the knights was destined to last a hundred years, through the most critical period of the Roman commonwealth. It was not a new class that he created, but a new party in the state. The knights, the moneyed men, the financial agents of the republic at home and abroad, who did not disdain to make money by other means than war and plunder, formed a powerful corporation, closely allied in interest and sympathies, and on that account ill-fitted to be the regular dispensers of justice between classes and parties. On more than one occasion, indeed, we shall find the knights do good service in preventing different sections of the nobles from flying at each others' throats, and in maintaining the practical working of the laws. But, as regarded their treatment of allies and subjects, the second order was as harsh and rapacious as the first, and it was not till a stronger hand was imposed upon them by the autocrat of the empire that the tyranny of either the knights or the senators was effectually controlled.

Another revolution which Caius had in view was not less righteous and expedient, but it was not given to him or to his generation to see it effected. This was the full admission of the Latins and Italians to the right of suffrage. Tiberius Gracchus and other enlightened statesmen before him had desired to accomplish this

salutary object, but the prejudices of the populace of Rome had steadily opposed it. If we may believe that the commons of the city feared lest their share of the public largesses might be curtailed by the intrusion of these new claimants, the fixed distribution of corn among them by the enactment of Caius may have helped to assuage their hostility. Since the land-tax had been remitted throughout Italy they need not apprehend any increase of their fiscal burdens. On the other hand, the Italians hungered keenly for the use of the public domains, for the assignment of land as colonists, for access to the honours of the city, and to the emoluments of offices in the provinces. Perhaps they were more nearly interested in the immunity they might enjoy as citizens from the arbitrary exactions and still more arbitrary violence which the Roman functionaries were wont to exercise upon the helpless subjects of the state. The mass of the citizens seem to have been generally won to the views of their generous reformer; but the nobles were deeply alarmed. Still more were they incensed when he proposed and carried a bill for founding colonies in the very towns which had stood in the most signal rivalry to Rome. Caius undertook to restore the political importance of Capua and Tarentum, in Italy, and essayed to plant a colony of plebeians amidst the ruins of Carthage. While absent upon this business, which he never accomplished, the nobles prepared a violent attack upon him. Opimius, the ablest and most determined of their class, was appointed to the consulship. Caius had unwisely divested himself of the tribuneship, and on his return to Rome found himself devoid of the protection which was most necessary for him. Caius was insulted by a lictor of the consul; when his partisans interposed in his defence the Senate, hastily summoned, declared 'the state in danger,' and invested Opimius with arbitrary power. Arms were seized on both sides, but the party of the consul was the more powerful. Caius was driven from the refuge he had sought on the Aventine, the hill of the plebeians; he had to cross the Tiber by the Sublician bridge, but his escape was cut off, and he finally required one of his own slaves to give him the death-blow. Opimius had promised to pay for his head by its weight in gold. Septimuleius, a friend of the consul, who had acquired the precious trophy, is said to have extracted the brains and replaced them with lead. Caius was pronounced a rebel, his estates confiscated, his widow deprived of her dowry. At a later period the people erected statues both to him and to his brother, and consoled the noble Cornelia by

A.U. 633.

B.C. 121.

their passionate devotion to his memory. The nobles, indeed, were enabled, by their command of the literature of the city, to brand the illustrious tribunes as demagogues and anarchists. But among the people their achievements and attempts were ever held in veneration. It seems not unlikely that the names of Tiberius and Caius, which they popularly attached to two of their favourite emperors, were an echo of the applause with which they had formerly greeted the generous aspirations of the Gracchi.

CHAPTER XXX.

The agrarian laws become ineffective—Appearance of the Cimbri and Teutones in Gaul, and defeat of Papirius Carbo—Disasters of the Romans in attempting to defend the transalpine province—Affairs of Numidia—War with Jugurtha, Metellus, and Marius—Marius becomes tribune and consul—He reorganises the Roman army, and overthrows Jugurtha—Numidia made a province—The Cyrenaica bequeathed to Rome—Marius undertakes the war against the Cimbri and Teutones—The great victories of Aquæ Sextiæ and Vercellæ—His fifth consulship.—(B.C. 121–101.)

THE success of the nobles appeared for the moment to be complete, and they celebrated it with insolent triumph. Optimus commemorated it with a medal on which Hercules was represented as the exterminator of monsters. In arrogant imitation of the pious act of Camillus, he dedicated a temple to Concord. The optimates were assured of the reversal of all the acts of the Gracchi, and the restoration of the balance of parties, in which all the advantage had been on their own side. The partisans of the Gracchi, though decimated in the bloody riot, still maintained their principles in the assemblies and the courts. But the Sempronian enactments were successively abolished or modified. The agrarian laws had hitherto been very imperfectly executed, and the provision by which the new possessors were forbidden to alienate their allotments had materially vitiated the boon to the poorer citizens, who cared little since the establishment of a largess of provisions, to quit the easy idleness of the city for the cultivation of distant farms. This prohibition was accordingly revoked. The result which Tiberius foresaw immediately followed. Rich capitalists began to swallow up the petty allotments of the poor, and the sole effect of the agrarian measures was to restore to the nobles in complete dominion the lands, the mere occupation of which had been denounced as so capital a

grievance. The Italians were left beyond the pale of the Roman franchise, and finally the aid of the censors was invoked to expunge from the list of knights and senators all who were suspected of leaning towards a reform of the constitution. The knights were at the same time deprived of their monopoly of the judicial benches, which were now perhaps justly divided between the two superior orders of the commonwealth.

The nobles were aided in this reaction by certain external circumstances. In the year B.C. 113 the city was first alarmed by the formidable names of the Cimbri and Teutones, who, U.C. 641.
B.C. 113. descending upon the northern flanks of the Alps from the heart of Germany, threatened to overleap the barrier which defended Italy from the barbarians. Some accounts, indeed, represent them as having actually entered upon the soil of the peninsula and sent envoys to Rome demanding lands and promising alliance. But this may be regarded as merely an anticipation of what followed at a later period. The Romans were at this time slowly making their way against the scattered tribes from Illyricum to the Danube and the mountains of Thrace. They barred the passes of the Rætian Alps, and would not have suffered a barbarian enemy to penetrate them without a struggle. Papirius Carbo, the general of the Romans, opposed the progress of these northern hosts and commanded them to retire. They yielded to his threats. He seized an opportunity of treacherously attacking them, but was defeated with great loss. The invaders might now have crossed the Alps without resistance, but they abruptly turned away in the direction of Gaul, and Rome was for the moment relieved from her apprehensions.

The occurrence of a perilous crisis often unnerves the masses and causes them to relax from the hostile attitude they may have assumed towards a domestic adversary. But at the same time it raises the spirit of the upper class, revealing to them the secret of their own strength in their habit of acting together in unity and concert. The nobles undertook the defence of the republic, while the people submitted passively to the reaction in their adversaries' favour. Numerous armies were despatched into transalpine Gaul, where Rome had gradually won her way, and after many struggles, and a crushing defeat of the Allobroges in the modern Savoy, had established a dominion from the Alps to the Rhone, to which she gave the special name of the Province. It required, however, all the constancy of the government and the people to make head against the hordes which now pressed into this region. From the year

109 to 107 they suffered a series of defeats. Four armies were successively beaten; a Silanus was routed, a Cassius was slain, a Scaurus was taken prisoner. The camps of Manlius and Cæpio, who had refused to unite together, were forced, one after the other, on the same day, and the slaughter was more overwhelming than had befallen the republic since the days of Cannæ or the Allia. Once more the victors refrained from attacking Italy. They separated into detached columns and ravaged the neighbouring countries. Some of them crossed the Pyrenees and penetrated into Spain.

During the respite thus fortunately afforded them the Romans were occupied with an enemy in a more distant quarter. Massinissa, king of Numidia, the favoured ally of the republic, had increased his acquisitions till they had completely enveloped the Roman province, reaching even to the borders of the western Syrtis, and exceeding both in extent and population the former territory of Carthage itself. Numidia became now in its turn an object of Roman jealousy. At the death of Massinissa, Scipio Æmilianus had required his three sons to share this kingdom between them, but two of them had died prematurely, and the sole dominion had lapsed again to the survivor, Micipsa. This chief proposed to divide the succession between his two legitimate sons, Adherbal and Hiempsal; but Jugurtha, his son by a concubine, far excelled them in spirit and abilities. Micipsa would have got rid of him in some dangerous warfare. He sent him with succours to Scipio before Numantia. The youth returned with improved abilities and enhanced reputation. He had acquired, moreover, a knowledge of the conquering Romans, and had learnt the secret of their internal corruption. Micipsa, dying soon afterwards, left to him one-third of his dominions, in the hope of securing the remaining portions for his other sons. But quarrels soon arose among them. Hiempsal was slain; Adherbal was routed and driven to seek refuge and assistance at Rome. Jugurtha betook himself to the resource of bribery, and sent envoys to the Senate laden with gold, which they distributed effectively. Commissioners were speedily appointed to make a fresh division of Numidia between the rival claimants. The settlement was not durable. Jugurtha quickly assailed Adherbal, besieged him

U.C. 642.
B.C. 112. in his capital, Cirta, made him prisoner, and put him to a cruel death. The Romans felt or affected indignation at the contempt with which their arrangement had been treated; but they were not displeased, we may believe, at the opportunity it gave them of peremptorily interfering with arms. A tribune, Memmius,

insisted on vindicating the honour of the republic in the name of the people. It was decreed that Numidia should be occupied by a consular army, and the province fell by lot to Calpurnius Bestia. But this expedition ended in a speedy and dishonourable accommodation. Once more Memmius rose to denounce the venality of the Senate and the incapacity of the magistrates. He particularly pointed at *Æmilius Scaurus*, one of the most eminent among the nobles, with whom Jugurtha was supposed to have tampered. The Numidian was summoned to Rome, a safeguard was assured him, but he was required to disclose the treachery of the culprits. Jugurtha obeyed, and prepared apparently to do all that was demanded of him, but he secretly contrived that another tribune should interfere against the proceedings. He was allowed at last U.C. 644. to return home; and as he passed the gates he exclaimed, B.C. 110. it is said, 'O venal city! destined quickly to perish, whenever a purchaser shall be found for thee.'

Jugurtha returned in safety to his own country, but he was followed by a Roman army. The consul *Albinus* was directed to keep him in check, but abstained from decisive hostilities. When he repaired to Rome to hold the comitia, his brother *Aulus* assumed the command and made a sudden movement to seize the royal treasures. He was baffled by the indiscipline of his own troops; his army was routed, and passed under the yoke. The Senate disavowed his capitulation, and sent *Albinus* to recommence the war. The tribunes demanded more loudly than before the punishment of the traitors who had accepted Jugurtha's bribes. *Scaurus*, against whom the movement was specially directed, had the address to get himself nominated upon the commission of inquiry, and presided at the condemnation of four consuls and a pontiff. It was a season of public alarm and public severity. The consul *Silanus* had just been routed by the *Cimbri*. The invasion of Italy was threatened from the north. Nevertheless, the affairs of Africa were not to be neglected. The fears of invasion being for a moment suspended, *Q. Cæcilius Metellus*, the colleague of *Silanus*, was de- U.C. 645. spatched to supersede *Albinus*, and new vigour was infused B.C. 109. into the Roman arms by drawing more closely the bonds of the old Roman discipline.

Metellus was not the least distinguished of the many of the same house and gens who contributed to the glory of the Roman aristocracy. He had the special merit of integrity and honour in an age when these virtues were less common than of old. The citizens

held him in high esteem accordingly, and on one occasion, when he was charged with some malversation, his judges refused even to examine the accounts he produced. He was ably seconded in his command by an officer of rising reputation, a rude soldier of the old Roman stamp, who had passed through every stage of military service, and was about to prove himself worthy of command. Caius Marius, one of the greatest names in the military annals of the republic, was a native of the obscure town of Arpinum, in the Volscian mountains. He began life as a farm labourer, according to the popular reports, which may be a misrepresentation; but in his early years he entered the ranks and raised himself into notice by courage and conduct. He learnt warfare under Scipio before Numantia, and gained his general's approval as much by his ready submission to discipline as by his prowess in the field. When Scipio's flatterers asked him where should Rome find such another general when he was gone, he is said to have touched the shoulder of Marius, saying, with a smile, 'Possibly here.' The ambition of the young Italian was roused. On the arrival of peace he plunged into the career of civil advancement. He courted the people as a man of the people himself. Hitherto their leaders had been mostly discontented aristocrats. Raised to the tribuneship, he urged the popular measures of the day; but in politics, untrained as he was, his aims were indistinct and his course unsteady. A fortunate marriage allied him with the high and ancient family of the Cæsars, and connected him with the interests of the nobility, however opposed he might be to them in his natural tastes and instincts. It was by this connexion, however, we may suppose, that he became attached to the service of Metellus, to whom he gave material aid. Restored to discipline the legions recovered their self-confidence, and became invincible as before. Metellus baffled his adversary's intrigues, broke up his combinations, and when the moment came defeated him in a great battle.

The services of Marius had been brilliant. He had saved his division from a sudden attack during the campaign of Zama; he had rescued convoys on which its safety depended; he had dispelled the clouds of Numidian cavalry which enveloped it. When not leading his troops to combat he could labour in the trenches among the common soldiers. His rude manners made him all the dearer to these rude comrades. But he had gained favour with the populace, possibly on the same account, and as their tribune had shown a bold front to the nobles, and even threatened to send a Metellus to prison.

He had become prætor, and succeeded to a province. At the age of forty-eight years, with high connexions and a good reputation, he was a ripe candidate for the consulship; but his birth was ignoble, and a new man, the maker of his own fortune, with a name not yet inscribed on the *fasti* of the commonwealth, had never yet been allowed to scale the summit of civil dignities. The consulship had of late been confined to a few of the most illustrious families. The Metelli alone had enjoyed it six times in the course of fourteen years, and now a Metellus repulsed with a bitter gibe the daring aspirations of his lieutenant. When he asked leave to quit the camp, in order to solicit the suffrages of the citizens, it was refused him. But he could make his presence formidable to his general even in the camp, and Metellus was induced at last to sanction his absence just on the eve of the election. By a great effort he reached the city in time; by another effort the people carried his election, and at the same time assigned him the province of Numidia, in defiance of the Senate, who proposed to prolong the command of Metellus. The people, indeed, had long claimed, and perhaps legitimately possessed, the right to make these appointments; but the Senate had for a long time actually conferred them; and Marius might regard his advancement as a triumph over the nobles. 'I can display,' he said, 'in my halls no ancestral images and ensigns of honour; but with my own hand I have won the trophies of war;' and he justly regarded himself as the conqueror of the Senate.

This conquest he determined to secure by making an army of his own. No more pregnant revolution was ever effected in the institutions of Rome than that by which Marius, discarding the old rule and principle that none should bear arms for the state but men who had a stake in its welfare, threw open the legions to the proletarians, or the rabble of the forum. No doubt an urgent case might be pleaded for this great innovation. The free population of Rome had been thinned by constant war; the Latins and Italians were still excluded from the legions and allowed only to serve as auxiliaries, and new enemies were rising up in formidable array both in the north and in the south. But the result was not the less revolutionary. The mendicants of the city, flushed with the hopes of plunder, and with the example of their low-born leader's success before them, rushed in crowds to his unfurled banner, and created for him an army devoid of any tie of honour or patriotism, ready to serve his ambition, in whatever field, and destined

to raise more than one ambitious general to the heights of civic authority.

Metellus was carrying on the war against Jugurtha, who had obtained on his side the alliance of Bocchus, king of Mauretania, when the news that he was superseded reached him. He retired in disgust to Rome, and was hardly soothed by the triumph which was granted him for no very signal services, together with the title of Numidicus. Marius took the command of the legions and the conduct of operations, and soon wrested from the Numidian almost all his strongholds. But the desert was the strongest position Jugurtha could possess. There he continued long to defy the attacks of the Romans; thence in turn he made many sudden attacks upon them, and believed for a moment that he had slain the consul with his own hand. But he was at last betrayed—so at least the Romans asserted—by his Mauretanian ally. Loaded with chains, he was

A.U. 648.

B.C. 106.

carried through his own dominions by Sulla, the consul's lieutenant, without any attempt being made to rescue him.

We need not doubt, though it is from the Romans only that our information comes, that he was as much hated for his tyranny by his own people as feared by the invader for his ability. Rome wreaked a cruel revenge upon him. He was reserved for two years to grace the triumphs of his conquerors, and ultimately cast into the depths of the prison under the Capitol, where he wrestled

A.U. 650.

B.C. 104.

with cold and hunger in a mortal agony of six days.

After the capture of Jugurtha, Marius remained in Africa to regulate the conditions of his conquests. To Bocchus he handed over the western portion of Numidia, while he attached its eastern borders to the Roman province of Africa. The central part was allowed to continue in nominal independence divided between two princes of the house of Massinissa. A few years later Ptolemæus

U.C. 658.

B.C. 96.

Apion, the last of the Grecian dynasty which reigned over the Cyrenaica, bequeathed his kingdom to the Romans.

A shadow of independence was left to the five cities which constituted this favoured seat of Hellenic art and literature; but they acknowledged the supremacy of Rome by an annual tribute of their precious gum, which sold for its weight in silver. Leptis, situated between the two Syrtes, received a Roman garrison, and maintained the communications of the republic between her subjects on the one side and her dependents on the other.

When Marius returned in 104 to claim his triumph, the consulship of the year had been already thrust upon him, even in his absence

The Cimbri, still wandering westward, and plundering the wretched hamlets of the Celtiberians, threatened to return to the richer spoils of the Roman Province, and speedily to burst the barrier of the Alps. During the progress, indeed, of the war against Jugurtha, the important tract between the Rhone and the Alps had been exposed to the invader. Since the loss of her five armies Rome had refrained from active operations in that quarter, and the inhabitants had been driven for the most part to seek shelter in their fortified cities. The Romans had become impatient of the injury and the disgrace; the people clamoured for a defender; the nobles stifled their jealousy, and the general voice raised Marius by acclamation to a second consulship, and gave him the conduct of the war.

The new levies which the champion of the republic carried with him into the Province were raw and easily terrified by the huge stature and hideous figures of the barbarians. The invaders, indeed, were scattered about in disorder, and allowed their opponents time for due preparation. Marius established his camp near the mouth of the Rhone, and the dyke he there cut to bring up his supplies from the sea still attests the labour he caused his men to undergo before he judged them fit to face the enemy. During the continuance of these preparations a third and again a fourth consulship were conferred upon him; so fully alive was Rome to the gravity of the situation, and to the merits of the great man she had chosen for her champion. At last the barbarians began a hostile movement. The Cimbri and Helvetii proposed to make the circuit of the Alps and pour into Italy through the Tyrol. The Teutones and Ambrones engaged to crush the resistance of Marius, and double the southern extremity of the mountains, where they fall into the Mediterranean. A place of meeting was appointed on the banks of the Po. The republic divided its forces to encounter them. While Marius retained his post in the transalpine province, his colleague Catulus led another consular army to the banks of the Adige. Marius still kept close in camp, restraining the impatience of his men by pretending to rely on the divine inspiration of a Syrian prophetess named Martha. The Teutones tried in vain to draw him out into the plain. At last they determined to leave him in the rear, and defiled before his camp, asking the soldiers derisively what messages they would send by them to their wives in Italy. As soon as they had passed Marius broke up from his camp and followed them. He had only to choose his own ground, so eager were they in their blind confidence to engage with him. The spot on which

he planted himself was twelve miles east of Aquæ Sextiæ—the modern Aix—a strong position, but ill-supplied with water. He
U.C. 652. was assured the enemy would brook no delay; and when
R.C. 102. his men remarked on this deficiency, he coolly bade them seek what they wanted in the stream that skirted the lines of the barbarians.

The great battle lasted for three days. The Ambrones were the first to assail the Romans while engaged in throwing up their entrenchments. This division was repulsed and routed. The Romans who had rushed forward in pursuit regained their position to await another attack from the Teutones, which was delayed for two days. The onset of the barbarians was again repelled, and their broken forces driven off in utter confusion. The multitudes slain were no doubt immense; the dead lying unburied on the field gave it the frightful appellation of the Putrid Plain, which seems to be still retained in the name of Pourrières, the village which now marks the spot. Marius selected the richest of the spoil to grace his expected triumph; the rest he collected in a heap to consume it as an offering to the gods. The soldiers were marshalled in a circle, crowned with chaplets; Marius himself, in a purple robe and girded for sacrifice, was about to kindle the pile, when horsemen suddenly rode up and greeted him with the auspicious news of his election to a fifth consulship. The remembrance of this solemnity seems still to be preserved in a rustic festival now celebrated in the vicinity. The people of Pertuis, a neighbouring village, march, we are told, year by year to the summit of their hill, raise a vast heap of brushwood, and consume it with shouts of *Victoire! Victoire!* The hill has received the name of Saint Victoire; but the saint no doubt is the representative of Marius himself, and takes his name from the victory of Marius over the Teutons.

Meanwhile the Cimbri, led by the Helvetii, had surmounted the northern ridges of the Alps, and reached the pass of the Brenner, the first which could afford a practicable route for the multitude of waggons with which they encumbered their marches. Catulus, it seems, despaired of closing the passage of the mountains. He placed himself in a strong position on the Adige; but even here he did not long maintain his ground. Terrified at the report of the fierceness of the invaders the Romans broke up in confusion, and Catulus, it is said, sought to disguise from them their panic by himself taking the lead in their retreat.

Marius had been recalled in haste to Rome. He postponed the

celebration of his triumph till he had saved the state a second time. He arrested the flight of Catulus, effected a junction with his own victorious troops, and quickly confined the Cimbri to the further bank of the Po. The barbarians declined a battle. They pretended they were waiting for their allies. When they sent to demand lands of Marius for themselves and the Teutons, 'The Teutons,' he replied, 'have got all the soil they need on the other side of the Alps.' The Cimbri were now compelled to fight alone. The great battle of the Campi Raudii, near Vercellæ, ended in their total defeat and destruction. Marius himself, charging at the head of his own legions, had been carried beyond the enemy's ranks. The victory was really won by Catulus, or rather by his lieutenant, Sulla. Nevertheless, the popular voice accorded the chief laurels to the hero of the former battle, and hailed him as the third founder of the city, along with Romulus and Camillus. The remembrance of the Cimbric invasion, the last great terror that
U.C. 652.
B.C. 101.
fell on Rome till the period of her decrepitude, was long impressed upon the mind and language of the people.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Insurrection of slaves in Italy, and in Sicily under Athenio—Marius consul for the sixth time—Struggles between the factions of the city for the privilege of the judicium—Impeachment of Cæpio—The 'gold of Tolosa'—Election of chief pontiff transferred to the plebs, but restricted to a patrician candidate—Sedition of Saturninus—The Italians advance a claim to the Roman franchise, and combine with the plebeian faction—M. Livius Drusus urges their claim, and is assassinated by the consul Philippus—Impeachment and defence of Æmilius Scaurus—Revolt of the Italians—The Social or Marsic war—Names of the leaders on both sides—The franchise conceded by the lex Plautia Papiria.—(B.C. 100–88.)

DURING the absence of Marius in Gaul the city had been harassed by domestic troubles of a new character. The slaves of Italy had revolted. Thirty years before a servile insurrection had been kindled in Sicily, and Rome had been compelled to arm her legions to extinguish the spreading conflagration. But now the danger was nearer home. The misery of the servile population was excessive. Composed of men of all nations and classes, there were numbers of them who felt in servitude a sense of degradation more intolerable than even chains and chastisement. But the severe policy of their masters kept them apart, and hindered them from conspiring with one another. Their revolts were always desultory and unconnected.

One movement was put down at Nuceria; another was crushed at Capua. A third, headed by a Roman profligate named Vettius, became more formidable. He armed his own slaves and slew his creditors, assumed the diadem and purple robe, surrounded himself with lictors, and invited the bondsmen of Campania to be his soldiers and subjects. Lucullus, the prætor, was sent against him, and he was betrayed by his own followers and forced to kill himself to escape more cruel punishment. The movement, however, spread from Campania to the opposite shores of Sicily. One chief of the insurgents, named Salvius, renowned for skill in divination, was perhaps an Etruscan. Another, named Athenio, is said to have been a Cilician; and he, too, practised on the credulity of his followers in Oriental fashion by a pretended inspiration. More
U.C. 655.
B.C. 99. than one Roman army was beaten by these miserable hordes. It was not till both Salvius and Athenio had fallen, with, it is said, a hundred thousand of their followers, that the flame was subdued, and that only for a season.

The attitude which Marius had assumed on his first public appearance as an opponent of the Senate might have been forgotten in his services to the common cause. The consent of the nobles united perhaps with the favour of the people in raising him to a sixth consulship in the year that followed his return to Rome. But careless himself of political objects, and engrossed with the single thought of maintaining his own pre-eminence both in war and peace, he eagerly lent himself to the cries of popular faction. The people were bent on reviving the agrarian demands of the Gracchi. The knights were irritated at the loss of their monopoly of the judicia. Personal spite and envy were really more active among them than any sense of political interests. Q. Servilius Cæpio, who had been defeated by the Cimbri, was selected as an object of popular persecution. A few years before he had captured Tolosa, in Gaul, by an act of signal treachery; but rash acts when successful the Romans only too easily condoned. He had now forfeited their forbearance by his recent disaster, and the hoards of gold which he had snatched from the temples of the Gaulish deities were deemed to have brought divine vengeance upon him and the armies he commanded. The people, incited by their demagogues, sought to deprive him of his imperium, confiscate his property, and declare him incapable of public service. The Senate defended its luckless proconsul, who had helped to replace it on the judicial benches. Violence ensued; a tribune drove the nobles from the comitium.

Æmilius Scaurus, the prince or leader of the Senate, was wounded in the tumult. *Cæpio* himself suffered deprivation, was cast into prison and banished, or as some say strangled in his dungeon. The retribution of his crime, according to the popular historians, did not stop here. His noble house was further dishonoured by the licentious conduct of his daughter; and the 'gold of *Tolosa*' passed into a proverb for the unlawful gain which precipitates its possessor into disgrace and misery.

In the year B.C. 103 the tribune *Domitius* transferred to the people the election of the chief pontiff, which had hitherto been vested in the college of the priests themselves. The head of the national religion was an important political personage. He U.C. 651.
B.C. 103. it was who opened or shut the oracular books of the *Sibyls*, appointed rites and sacrifices, and set the seal of the divine approval to every public act, or withheld it therefrom. This engine of government had been long grasped by the nobles; it could still be handled by patricians only; but the patricians had ceased to be identified in interest and feeling with the ruling oligarchy of the nobles or *Optimates*, as these are now commonly called; and from the hands of patricians, as leaders of the people, the traditions of the ancient polity were destined to receive their rudest shocks. The appointment of the chief pontiff by the people became eventually an important agent in the overthrow of the Roman constitution. With this aggression were combined the attempts of the tribunes *Philippus* and *Glaucia* to enact an agrarian law, and to wrest the *judicia* once more from the senators, and vest them in the knights exclusively. The first measure failed, but the other was successful.

Marius had been raised to a sixth consulship; yet he was neither popular in his measures nor eloquent in his address. In all civil matters and amid the noise of popular assemblies the con- U.C. 654.
B.C. 100. queror of the *Cimbri* was devoid of courage and presence of mind. Nor was his policy attempered to the views of his adherents in the city. He favoured and rewarded the *Italians*, whom the Roman commons regarded with anxious jealousy. After his late victories he ventured as consul to confer the citizenship on a thousand veterans from *Camerinum*. The act was illegal as well as unpopular, and *Marius* did not make it more palatable by the excuse he offered: 'Amid the din of arms I could not hear the voice of the laws.' The tribunes, however, supported him in the favours he bestowed upon the *Italians*, and grants of land were made to many distinguished soldiers among them, particularly in the territory of the *transalpine*

Province, where the land, it was argued, had been lost to the native population, and re-conquered by the Romans to be disposed of at their own pleasure. This measure was not, indeed, effected without altercation and violence. The tribune Saturninus led the populace and drove his opponents out of the forum, while Marius pretended to keep aloof, or even to encourage the nobles. But at the last moment he suffered the storm to take its course, and let them fall into worse defeat and disaster. Metellus, as the chief of his illustrious party, was chosen by Saturninus for special insults; and though his friends might still have been strong enough to protect him, he preferred in his indignation to retire into voluntary exile.

Upon the arrogant tribune, indeed, the nobles soon had their revenge. Saturninus offered himself for a renewal of his office. He tried to impose upon the people by pretending to produce to them a son of Tiberius Gracchus. He caused C. Memmius, one of his adversaries, to be assassinated in the forum. He ventured in self-defence to seize upon the Capitol and defy his opponents with an armed rebellion. The nobles denounced him as aspiring to royalty, and the people listened again to the cry so often fatal to their leaders. The state was declared to be in danger, and Marius charged with its defence. The consul, whose functions in the city were purely civil, and who had no armed force at hand, blockaded the fortress

A.U. 654. which he could not storm, and soon reduced the enemy

B.C. 100. by cutting the water-pipes which supplied it. He is said to have engaged to spare the life of the rebel chief; but the people took the matter into their own hands, and destroyed their friend and patron with little scruple.

This was, perhaps, the last moment when the establishment of a limited monarchy might have been possible at Rome. Had the popular faction possessed among them a man equally honest and able, in whose favour they could have agreed to exercise the power which had exalted Marius to six successive consulships; had the nobles been directed by men of sense and patriotism to yield to the just claims of their own commons and of the Italians, the empire of Cæsar and Augustus, two generations later, might have been anticipated and happily modified. The mass of the citizens was still sound at heart, and not incapable, perhaps, of the self-control required for the due exercise of high political functions. While they placed all private ambition under the check of a sovereign authority, they might still have kept a check on the sovereign himself by their own firmness and moderation. Public virtue, indeed, could

not have been maintained without recognising on a wider scale the proper claims of humanity, without renouncing the hateful rights then generally accorded to the conqueror over his subjects and the master over his slaves. But no teaching of the day set forth any principles of action adequate to command such an apparent sacrifice; and it must be confessed that the moral elements of a stable government by a limited kingly power, were hardly to be found at this time throughout the heathen world. We shall presently see that neither the aristocracy nor the democracy of Rome was capable of maintaining the equilibrium of government, and that the naked despotism under which she ultimately fell was the only possible solution of her political agony.

For some time past the Italians, as we have observed, had been putting forth claims to the Roman franchise. If we would analyse, in a small compass, the motives from which this pretension was generally urged, we must reject, in the first instance, the modern notions of equity and inherent right. 'Rome for the Romans'—the enjoyment, that is, by the conquerors of all the fruits of conquest—was the fundamental principle of Roman policy, the moral basis of which was unquestioned alike by the rulers and their subjects. If, under any circumstances, the republic relaxed from this primary idea of sovereignty, even the states she favoured would regard it only as a concession extorted by some necessity of the moment, which it would be preposterous to claim as a right. The road to Roman honours and magistracies might allure a few notables in an Italian burgh, but to the population generally the franchise of the city offered for a long period few attractions. The severe discipline to which the Roman commons were subjected, the military service enforced upon them, the harsh prohibition, long prevailing, of the exercise of trade and arts, the jealousy with which the avenues to office were guarded, must have rendered the exchange of nationality (for the Italian who acquired the Roman franchise relinquished his own) a very slender gratification to the multitude. There was, indeed, some immunity of taxation to be set against these drawbacks; but the advantages which might be derived from a share in the provincial administration were confined to a small class, and could hardly seem accessible to a 'new man' from Italy. The pressing motive which inspired the cry now raised for this questionable privilege was suggested by the agrarian struggles of the Gracchi. The public domain within the peninsula being at this moment occupied chiefly, as we have seen, by noble landowners, was sub-

let by them to the natives. The Italians, deprived of the legal possession of their own soil by the conquest, became virtually repossessed of it by the mere abuse of proprietary right, which allowed a few great families to enjoy the usufruct of the national territory. But from the strict division of this territory among the citizens of Rome, as demanded by the Gracchi, it would result that the Italian sub-tenant would be ejected to make room for a new plebeian proprietor. The measures threatened by the demagogues were really more formidable to the Italian peasant than to the Roman aristocrat himself. They touched the pride and privilege of the latter class, but they menaced the very existence of the former. It was open to the Italian either to join with the nobles in resisting the demand of the people, or to urge his own admission to the franchise, and so claim his share with the Roman in a new distribution of property. The latter course was that which he adopted; and probably it was the most sagacious. The leaders of the plebeian agitation found themselves at the head of an Italian agitation also, and the two movements proceeded together, and were, during the external troubles of the republic, suspended together. When security was restored from without, the cry of the Italians rose louder than ever; and it was plain that the next great struggle of the governing class at Rome would be against the intrusion of its foreign subjects within the pale of Roman property and privilege. But the knights availed themselves of this foreign aid in their contest with the Senate; and thus the party of the nobles, the Optimates or oligarchy of Rome, found itself arrayed in defence of its prerogative against the widest and most formidable coalition it had yet encountered.

The strength of the Optimates, sapped and battered as it was, still lay in the remnant they had preserved of their old control of the state religion, by which they could at times make an effective appeal to popular interests and prejudices. But they were at the same time firmly knit together by their own military organisation, and by their disciplined bands of clients and retainers, trained to the use of their suffrage as well as of their arms. The Italians, however, whose country extended northwards to the *Æsar* and the *Rubicon*, where it met the frontier of *Cisalpine Gaul*, comprised the whole mass of races which had singly or in concert resisted the advance of the Roman arms through so many centuries, and which still, though conquered and disunited, contained among them the elements of a powerful nation. The free constitution retained gene-

rally by their cities had bred a race of able speakers and statesmen; and the Cimbric war had trained many thousands of brave veterans, who had been disbanded after the battle of Vercellæ, and not yet recalled to the Roman standards by the urgency of any other foreign contest. With these resources among themselves, they had still, moreover, a powerful friend in the Roman tribunate. M. Livius Drusus, a son of the opponent of the Gracchi, whom the nobles had employed to effect a hollow compact between them and the Italians, had devoted himself in earnest to the policy which his father only pretended to advocate. In assuming, however, the patronage of the movement the younger Drusus did not abandon the party of the nobles with which he was hereditarily connected. He sought honestly, as it would seem, to conciliate and combine. He carried the restoration of the *judicia* to the senators, while at the same time he introduced three hundred knights into the Senate. These measures he coupled with a promise of lands to the needy citizens, and of the franchise to the natives and Italians. Of all the Roman demagogues Drusus may justly be esteemed the wisest and the ablest. His views were large, and his frank and bold demeanour corresponded with them. When his architect offered him the plan of a house so disposed as to screen him from the oversight of his neighbours, 'Build me rather,' he exclaimed, 'a dwelling wherein all my countrymen may witness all I do.' But the necessities of his position, which required him to make friends of all parties, demanded an exorbitant outlay, and the means by which he supplied it exposed him to censure. His profusion surpassed that of all his predecessors in the arts of popular flattery, and he ventured to vaunt that his successors would have nothing left to give but the skies above and the dust beneath them. His manners were overbearing, and might suggest the idea that he aimed at a regal position. Such was the man whom both Senate and people long united to honour, and whom the Italians now invoked as their leader. In his sickness all the cities of the peninsula offered vows for his recovery. Nor was his name forgotten among them for many generations. It combined in the person of Livia, the wife of Augustus, with those of Tiberius and Caius, to render the empire of the Cæsars a popular institution.

From the moment, indeed, that Drusus avowed himself the champion of the Italians the hostility of the privileged classes at home was aroused against him. Even in his own house he was feared and denounced as a public enemy. Among his family was a nephew,

M. Porcius Cato, afterwards illustrious, then but a child of four years. A chief of the Marsians, at his uncle's table, amused himself by asking the child to support the Italian cause. The little Cato sturdily refused. He was offered playthings and sweetmeats, but still refused. At last the Marsian, piqued at his obstinacy, held him by the leg from the window, and again demanded his assent with the direst threats. But caresses and menaces proved equally fruitless, and the Italian sighed to think what resistance he must expect from the men of Rome if a mere child could display a courage so inflexible. The career of Drusus, however, was a short and sad one. The indisposition of both senators and knights to his measures became more strong and vehement. He was compelled to throw himself more unreservedly into the hands of the foreigners. To the last he struggled to confine them within legitimate limits, and came forward himself to denounce a plot formed by some of them for the assassination of the consuls. But they passed at last beyond his control. Pompædus Silo, the chief of the Marsians, marched with ten thousand men along by-roads, and threatened to make a rush at the city. The Senate consented to parley with him, and held out hopes of concession. For the moment blows were averted; but in the Senate-house the discussion was still animated, and the decision dubious. Some of the Italians themselves wavered; some of their champions in the city were gained over. When the day for voting arrived the consul Marcius Philippus attempted to break up the meeting. One of the tribunes' officers seized and throttled him. The city was thrown into a state of the fiercest excitement. Tribunes were arrayed against tribunes, nobles against nobles, Romans against Romans, Italians against Italians. The streets were traversed by armed bands on either side. Civil war seemed im-
U.C. 663.minent. At this crisis Drusus, attended by a number of
B.C. 91.his adherents, was returning to his house. Passing through a dark corridor, he felt himself suddenly struck, and fell to the ground, exclaiming, 'When will Rome again find so good a citizen?' The assassin escaped in the crowd.

The murder was generally imputed to the Senatorial faction, and specially to the consul Philippus. The magistrates refused inquiry, and exerted themselves all the more to abrogate such of their victim's measures as had already passed into law, while his adherents were too stupefied to resist. They put up their creatures to impeach some of the noblest Optimates, who were themselves partisans of the movement. A Bestia, a Colta, a Mummius, a Pompeius, and a

Memmius were condemned. Among the accused was the illustrious *Æmilius Scaurus*. He deigned only to reply, 'Varius the Iberian charges Scaurus, prince of the Senate, with exciting the Italians to revolt. Scaurus denies it. Romans ! which of them do you believe ? ' The people absolved him with acclamations.

The Italians had already concerted an alliance, and flew to arms. The death of their champion *Drusus*, and the prostration of their adherents within the city, reduced them to their own national resources. The Marsians were summoned to take the lead, and their chief, *Pompædus Silo*, was the soul of the confederacy. The *Pelignians*, the *Picentines*, the *Vestines*, the *Marrucines*, the *Samnites*, the *Lucanians*, and the *Apulians*, together with the Marsians, gave mutual hostages and resolved on a simultaneous rising. They proposed to constitute a great federal republic, with consuls, prætors, and a Senate of five hundred nobles, and chose for their capital the stronghold of *Corfinium*, in the country of the *Pelignians*, giving it the name of *Italica*. This alliance was confined, indeed, for the most part to the *Sabellian* tribes. The *Etrurians*, the *Latins*, and the *Umbrians* held aloof from it, and together with *Campania*, which had become thoroughly Romanized, adhered to the fortunes of Rome. The *Bruttians* no longer existed as a nation ; and the cities of *Magna Græcia* had ceased to have any political importance. The Gauls beyond the *Rubicon*, who had aided *Hannibal* against the Romans, long since exhausted or satisfied, made no effort now to recover their independence.

What was the relative strength of the combatants thus arrayed against each other ? Three centuries earlier, at the date of the Gaulish invasion, the nations of *Sabellia*, together with the *Apulians*, could arm, it is said, 200,000 men ; while the *Etrurians*, *Latins*, and *Umbrians* boasted 120,000 warriors. Supposing the same proportions to remain, the allies who still remained to the republic may have alone balanced three-fifths of the whole force opposed to her. But the census of Rome numbered at this time at least 400,000 warriors, and she could draw largely from her provinces beyond the peninsula. Her forces, therefore, trebled or quadrupled those of her adversaries. She held, moreover, the chief places of strength throughout their territories, connected by the great military roads. From these resources, however, ample deduction must be made. Powerful garrisons were to be maintained at every point of her vast empire. In Greece and Asia, in Spain and Africa, Rome was still encamped. The disposition of her allies was doubt-

ful and precarious; her own citizens were capricious; jealousies and suspicions were rife among her own chiefs and leaders.

The Social, or Marsic, War commenced in the year B.C. 90, and lasted through three campaigns. The republic was taken by

U.C. 664. surprise, while the Italians had long prepared themselves
B.C. 90. to become the assailants. Operations were carried on at the same time throughout all the central regions of the peninsula. The historians enumerate the opposing commanders on both sides, and give a long list of their engagements, in which they almost uniformly claim the victory for the Romans. Among the captains of the republic we meet with various names which become illustrious at a later date. Marius himself was a veteran in arms, but he seems not to have been trusted with extensive command, and he was perhaps too closely connected with the enemy to take active measures against them. But around him were ranged a L. Cæsar, a Rutilius, a Pompeius Strabo, and a greater than these, L. Cornelius Sulla, who gained, indeed, the chief laurels of the war. A Cæpio, with the curse of the Volscian gold weighing on his house, was defeated and slain. The young Cn. Pompeius bore arms in these operations; and Cicero, the chief of Roman orators, earned under the auspices of Strabo his first and only stipend. On the side of the Italians the most distinguished leaders were Pompædus, Judacilius, and Motulus, who seem to have maintained the Italian cause with constancy, and eventually with more success than our accounts would lead us to expect. Even in the midst of their reputed victories the Romans empowered the consul Cæsar to offer to their allies all the advantages which they refused to their adversaries. The *lex Julia* conferred the franchise on the Etrurians and the Umbrians. Two years later they made up their minds to extend this boon by the *lex Plautia Papiria* even to the confederated Italians. Every Italian who chose to come to Rome and claim the franchise within sixty days was received into the bosom of the commonwealth. Ten tribes were added to the thirty-five already existing. The offer, after all, was not very generally accepted. The Roman religion required that every legal measure should be sanctioned by certain ceremonies, and these could only be performed within the sacred precincts of the city. It was admitted on all hands that the suffrage could only be given at Rome. Accordingly the franchise offered little attraction to distant citizens, who were required to forego their local citizenship for a privilege they had little opportunity of exercising. After all the blood which had

been shed in the struggle the Italians found themselves content for the most part to retain their old position. The roll of the Roman citizens, which in the census of 640 numbered 394,336, in that of 668 (B.C. 86), the next of which we have account, had not increased beyond 463,000, and sixteen years later was only 450,000. But the precedent now set for the first time on so large a scale bore ample fruit in the course of later Roman history. The full franchise was conceded in special instances to various states in Spain, Gaul, and Africa; while the Latin, which conferred, as we have seen, a certain eligibility for the Roman, was even more widely diffused. Pompeius Strabo extended it to the entire nation of the transpadane Gauls. On the whole the liberal concessions of this period evince in a marked manner the prudence of the Roman government at one of the most critical moments of its career. The strong national prejudice against which they were carried was now finally overthrown, and the Roman writers uniformly agree in applauding the policy which dictated them, and ascribing thereto the preservation of the state at this time, and the unabated vigour of its subsequent progress.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Rise of P. Cornelius Sulla—Mithridates, king of Pontus, defies the republic and causes a massacre of Roman citizens in Asia Minor—Quarrel between Marius and Sulla—Marius compelled to flee from the city—His wanderings and adventures—Sulla takes the command in Asia—Cinna creates disturbance, and is expelled from the city—Marius and Cinna unite and occupy Rome, and make a bloody proscription of the Senatorial party—Murder of Octavius, Crassus, Antonius, and Merula—Marius attains his seventh consulship, and dies, possibly by his own hand—Reputed sacrifice of Q. Mucius Scævola at his funeral.—(B.C. 88–86.)

THE names of the great leaders of parties have been for some time coming more and more into prominence in our annals, and the history of Rome will now for many years chiefly chronicle the personal rivalry of her warriors and statesmen. In the year which closed the contest of the republic with her Italian allies Sulla was forty-nine years old, Marius about seventy. From campaign to campaign Sulla had dogged the steps of the elder captain, and was always ready to step in and seize the opportunities which the other cast carelessly in his way. Not that Marius was indifferent to the

progress of his junior. He felt chagrin at the contrast in their birth and origin, for P. Sulla, though needy in point of fortune, was a scion of the illustrious house of the Cornelii, and knew the advantage of such a connexion. Sulla, moreover, was trained in Grecian accomplishments, which Marius vainly pretended to despise. Sulla spoke and wrote Greek; his autobiography became probably the textbook of the Greek historians of Rome, from whom we chiefly derive our accounts of him. Yet his nature was essentially rough and plebeian. With the affectation of letters he combined, like many other noble Romans, addiction to gross debauchery and mean associates. His eyes, we are told, were of a piercing blue, and their sinister expression was heightened by the coarseness of his complexion, disfigured by pimples and blotches, compared by the raillery of the Greeks to a mulberry sprinkled with meal. His manners were haughty and morose, though not devoid of a certain sensibility, for he was easily moved, it is said, even to tears, by a tale of sorrow. No single act of kindness and generosity is recorded of him. The nobles, who accepted him as their champion, had no personal liking for him. Yet the aggrandisement of his party was a species of fanaticism with him. He despised the isolated ascendancy of a Marius, and aspired to rule in Rome at the head of a dominant oligarchy.

Marius had quitted the camp at the most critical moment of the war, and during his retirement Sulla brought the contest to a close, U.C. 666. having obtained the consulship in 666. The arrange-
B.C. 88. ments for peace were hastened by the threats of a war with Mithridates, king of Pontus. Sulla was still consul when it became necessary to choose a general to command in the East. For this command Sulla had now the highest claim; but Marius was jealous, and mortified at having imprudently given way to him. He hurried back to Rome, showed himself among the young soldiers at exercise in the Campus, and tried to prove himself still apt for arms by running, wrestling, and swimming in rivalry with them. But the nobles no longer regarded him; they had found another champion on whom they could rely. They mocked the clumsy feats of the veteran candidate, and persuaded the people to reject and dismiss him to his retreat in Campania. The business in hand demanded, indeed, a man of the maturest powers, as well as the highest abilities. Pontus, on the eastern shores of the Euxine sea, the region from which Mithridates took his title, constituted but a small part of his dominions. His patrimonial kingdom he inherited from a line of princes of high Persian extraction, and he was himself the

sixth of his name. To the north he had extended his sway over the Cimmerian Bosphorus as far as the Borysthenes, while to the south he had received from his father the sovereignty of Phrygia, which the republic had sold for a sum of money. This country, indeed, the Romans had recently wrested from him; but he had indemnified himself by placing an infant child of his own on the throne of Cappadocia. The armies of Mithridates were recruited from the hardy mountaineers of the Caucasus and the Taurus; but his captains were mostly perhaps of Greek extraction, not inferior in military science to the Romans themselves. Nor had he failed to enlist in his service many able citizens of the republic, for the allegiance of the Romans sat loosely upon them in the provinces, and they easily yielded to the blandishments of Eastern potentates. His own genius was conspicuous both in war and peace. He was robust in bodily frame, and expert in martial exercises. The story that he had fortified his system against poison by the constant use of antidotes may be a mere romance; nor is it more credible that he could converse, as is related, with the various tribes of his subjects in twenty-five different languages.

In the year B.C. 93 the Romans had interfered to overturn the appointments Mithridates had made to the throne of Cappadocia. He did not openly resist, but he instigated Tigranes, king of Armenia, to expel the nominee of the republic. U.C. 661.
B.C. 93. Ariobarzanes fled to Rome, and obtained promises of support. Sulla, at this time prætor in Cilicia, was directed to reinstate him, nor did the king of Pontus offer resistance. But when Italy was convulsed with the Social War his courage rose, and he interfered with arms to expel Ariobarzanes. Sulla had been recalled to defend the republic at home; nevertheless, such was the indomitable constancy of the Roman Senate, that when the Cappadocian appeared again as a fugitive before them they despatched a second force to restore him once more. Again Mithridates yielded. The Romans, however, pressed more violently upon him, and at last he turned at bay, routed their armies, ejected Ariobarzanes a third time from his sovereignty, and raising the whole native population against the Western invaders, effected a general massacre of the Roman residents in Asia Minor. Eighty thousand citizens of the republic, according to some even a hundred and fifty thousand, are said to have fallen. It is probable that even the smaller number is a gross exaggeration, but it is doubtless true that the Roman traders and fiscal agents had already settled in those regions in vast numbers,

following the steps of the Greeks who had rushed in behind the armies of Alexander.

The Senate, however, was now free to confront this formidable assailant with adequate forces, and had pitched, as we have seen, upon Sulla to take the command. The victorious legions of the nobles were launched against the tyrant of Asia; but Marius meanwhile was brooding over his disappointments and meditating revenge. The new citizens of Italy were already mortified at finding the inefficiency of their votes, confined as they were to a small minority of the tribes, and the slender importance attached to their favour. The nobles complained of their want of influence, the commonalty of the paltry price their suffrages commanded. Marius determined to avail himself of this dissatisfaction. Between him and the Italians there was an ancient sympathy, and this it might be easy to improve into a strict alliance. He offered them the means of acquiring a predominating influence in the tribes, and recommenced his old game of popular agitation. With the aid of a demagogue named Sulpicius Galba he raised a violent tumult in the city, and got himself nominated to the Eastern command in place of his rival. But Sulla had not yet quitted Italy. He had, indeed, with difficulty escaped from the city and thrown himself into his camp. From thence, having secured the entire devotion of his soldiers, he returned in fighting array with six legions. The Marians had never dreamed of the armies of Rome being thus turned against her. Marius himself fancied for a moment that they would yield to the majesty of the law, and sent two unarmed prætors to require them to halt. But the civil war had, in fact, begun. The emissaries of the citizens were stripped and beaten by their men-at-arms. The people, struck with consternation, insisted on yielding to the advancing host, and Marius had but just time to make his escape before Sulla entered Rome as a conqueror.

On the morrow Sulla summoned the people to assemble in the forum. He explained to them that a faction had compelled him to
U.C. 666. use force; but having taken arms, he would not now lay them
B.C. 88. down till he had secured the power of the nobles against the aggressions of the tribunes. He abrogated the enactments of Sulpicius in favour of the Italians and the commons of the city, and repealed the solemn rule of the constitution which gave the force of law to the plebiscita or resolutions of the people alone. Thus the violence of Marius impelled his rival to the opposite extreme, and established a counter-revolution on the ruins of tribunician ambition.

Meanwhile Marius was fleeing for his life and hiding his head upon which a price had been set. His romantic adventures are related with great animation by his biographer, Plutarch, and form a vivid page in ancient history. His retirement, first to the obscurity of his private farm at Solonium, on the Latian coast; his hurrying from thence to Ostia with hope of effecting his embarkation on a vessel there kept waiting for him; his hiding in a waggon under a load of beans, and his eventual escape in a casual trader bound for Libya; his landing under the torments of sea-sickness near Circeii; his wanderings in the pine-groves of that solitary coast, while he kept up the spirits of his companions by repeating the prodigies which had foretold his greatness, both past and future; the various adventures of his harassed flight that followed, and his concealing himself at the last extremity among the reeds at the mouth of the marshy Liris—these incidents need not be here more particularly related, but are worth the notice of the student, not only for their romantic interest, but for the glimpse they give us of the desolate and half-peopled character of regions so closely connected with the capital of the great empire. Marius was at last discovered and dragged from his miserable retreat. He was cast into prison at Minturnæ, and the magistrates of the place determined to put him to death and claim the reward offered. A Cimbrian slave, according to the story, was sent to dispatch him, but a bright flame glared from his eyes, and a voice issued from the gloom around him: ‘Wretch! dare you to slay Caius Marius?’ The barbarian fled in terror, exclaiming, ‘I cannot kill Caius Marius!’ The magistrates and the people were struck with the omen, and contrived to release the prisoner and speed him forwards. He thus finally made good his escape to the coast of Africa. While he sat in meditation among the ruins of Carthage, himself a livelier image of a ruin hardly less appalling, the Roman governor of the province warned him to be gone. The Numidian could not venture to shelter him, and he was compelled to take refuge on an island off the coast, where he continued for a time unmolested.

While the conqueror of the Cimbri was thus fleeing before the face of his own countrymen, and his triumphant rival engaged in the war against Mithridates in the East, affairs were advancing to a new and unexpected crisis at Rome. The Samnites had never entirely laid down their arms at the general pacification of Italy: they rose again under another Pontius Telesinus, excited fresh movements among the slaves and bandits in the south of the penin-

sula, and at one moment threatened a descent upon Sicily. Metellus Pius, to whom the repression of this new Social War was entrusted, could not bring the enemy to a decisive engagement, but continued to make head against him. Another army was still in Picenum, under the command of Pompeius Strabo, who had refused or delayed to surrender it after the conclusion of hostilities in that quarter. The Senate now sent the late consul, Pompeius Rufus, to receive the legions from his hands. But there were no means to discharge the pay due to the soldiers, and they were ill-disposed to obey its orders. A mutiny broke out, which Strabo was suspected of exciting. Rufus was massacred in the act of performing sacrifice. Strabo thereupon presented himself and restored order, but inflicted no punishment on the culprits. The legions of Rome had slipped from the hands of the government, and become the personal following of their imperators.

Nor was the government more powerful at home. As soon as Sulla had withdrawn to Asia the demagogue Cinna rose in the ascendant. Backed by a party among the people rather than by the mass of the commons, he avowed himself the reviver of the recent order of things, demanded the recall of Marius and the exiles, the restoration of the laws of Sulpicius, the full and final emancipation of Italy. In the actual temper of the public mind such demands could not fail to produce sedition in the forum. A disturbance ensued; blood was shed. But Cinna had miscalculated his strength. The new citizens, on whom he relied, were few in number. The Senate, with Octavius, the colleague of Cinna in the consulship, and some of the tribunes, and a large part of the populace of the forum banded themselves against him, and drove his partisans out of the city. Cinna seems to have counted on Strabo and his army, but Strabo preferred to await the issue of events, and left the factions of the city to exhaust one another.

The victorious party promptly, by a violent stroke of lawless policy, deprived Cinna of the consulship, and elected L. Merula, a flamen of Jupiter, and a noble of high position and character, in his room. Cinna, proscribed and outlawed, fled into Campania, and moved the new citizens of that district to shelter and support the patron who had suffered, as he pretended, in their behalf. He succeeded in collecting an armed following. Many exiles of the Marian party flocked to his standard, and among them was Q. Sertorius, an officer of distinction. Nor did he fail to unite himself with the Samnites and Lucanians, the avowed enemies of the repub-

lic. Marius himself, wandering from coast to coast and threading the ambuscades of a thousand enemies, was not unapprised of his proceedings. He communicated with his old adherents; and when he suddenly threw himself on the coast of Etruria he was joined by a party of them at the head of five hundred fugitive slaves. Etruria was crowded, as we have seen, with a population of serfs, whose native masters kept them in a state of degradation and misery. With such as these there could be no question of political rights: they were ready to fight for vengeance and plunder. But that was enough for the reckless anarchy Marius, who now advanced upon the city from the north while Cinna was approaching in the opposite direction. At the same time Sertorius and Carbo were menacing her from other quarters, and Rome found herself encircled by four armies of her own rebellious citizens, backed by the resources of the Samnite insurrection. To avert these accumulating dangers the Senate hastily recalled Metellus, bidding him make peace with the Samnites on any terms. But when they met his approaches with intolerable exactions he ventured to disobey his orders, and broke off the negotiation. He left a small detachment to watch the foe, and hastened back to man the walls of the city. His lieutenant was speedily overpowered, and the Samnites rushed onward devoting Rome to destruction. 'No peace,' they exclaimed, 'for Italy till the forest be rooted up in which the Roman wolves have made themselves a covert.' The Senate was reduced to extremity. They now implored Strabo's assistance with promises and flatteries; but he still seemed to waver, and was probably in treaty with the Marians. While treason was at work in the city and the Janiculum was for a moment opened but again shut against Marius, mutiny broke out in Strabo's camp, which he had brought under the walls to hold the fortune of either party in his hand. He would have been slain himself but for the devotion of the young Pompeius, his son, already a favourite with the soldiers. A pestilence broke out, which swept off numbers in the city and at the same time paralysed the armed forces on both sides. Strabo himself was carried off by the sickness, unless we accept another story, that he was accidentally killed by lightning, or admit the suspicion that he was actually assassinated. Then at last the Senate in despair sent to Cinna to arrange terms of accommodation, and when these were refused to solicit an amnesty. Cinna was seated in his curule chair, with lictors and fasces around him. Marius, squalid and unshorn, clothed in black rags as an exile and an outlaw, stood in

silence beside him, and caused gloomy forebodings of the proscriptions that were to follow. The victors had consented, indeed, to spare their chief enemy, the consul Octavius; and he, relying on their assurances, had declined to make his escape. He was seized in his robes of office, his head severed from his body and suspended by Cinna's orders from the rostra. This, it is said, was the first instance of the exhibition of such horrid trophies in the city, but the practice was too often repeated in the course of the civil wars of Rome. A massacre followed; knights and meaner citizens were slain and cast out for burial, but the mangled heads of the senators

U.C. 667. were ostentatiously exhibited in the forum. The list of
B.C. 87. the slain included many of the noblest names in Rome.

P. Crassus, who had been both consul and censor, either slew himself or was killed by the assassins. M. Antonius, celebrated at the time, and long afterwards remembered as one of the greatest of Roman orators, was murdered by the leader of a body of soldiers whom he had moved by his eloquence to spare him. Two of the Julii, kinsmen of Julius Cæsar, the future dictator, suffered. Some were caught and murdered in the act of fleeing; others who threw themselves on the mercy of Marius were coldly repulsed and ruthlessly slaughtered. Marius for his part still wrapped himself in silence; but his followers were instructed to spare those only to whom he gave his hand to kiss. The swords of the hired assassins were directed first against the adherents of Sulla and the aristocratic faction; their numbers were speedily swelled by slaves and Italians, who sacrificed men of every party to indiscriminate fury and cruelty.

When at last Marius and Cinna thought fit to arrest the carnage and pillage Sertorius was charged to restore order with military force. But many victims were still offered up under forms of judicial process. Cinna could not pardon the illustrious Merula the crime of intrusion into his office. Catulus, the noble colleague of Marius in his last battle against the Cimbri, threw himself on his knees and vainly begged for his life. 'You must die,' was the only answer vouchsafed him, and he was compelled to suffocate himself with charcoal. When sated with vengeance the chiefs of the revolution began to reorganise the government. Not deigning even to convene the assembly of the tribes, they nominated themselves to

U.C. 668. the highest magistracy. Marius became consul for the
B.C. 86. seventh time. At the age of seventy, his health broken and his strength failing, he reached the summit of his aspirations,

and fulfilled the prophecy on which he had relied in his darkest moments. He was even desirous of leaving his colleague to preside in the city, and assuming himself the command of the legions and wresting from Sulla the conduct of affairs in the East. But the effort was beyond his strength. His mood was now as desponding and gloomy as it had once been sanguine. Wearied with a life in which he had enjoyed all the favours of fortune and suffered her worst buffets, he could hardly wish to protract existence and multiply its experiences. One evening, while walking with some friends after supper, he fell to talking of the incidents of his career from boyhood; and after enumerating his triumphs and his perils, no man of sense, he said, ought to trust again to so balanced a fortune. He took leave of his companions, and keeping his bed for seven days successively, was found dead with no known or suspected illness. Such is the account we have received, and we may readily imagine that he actually put an end to his career by suicide. His obsequies were celebrated with a public ceremonial. It was related that the tribune Fimbria sacrificed a noble victim to the manes of the dead, after the fashion of the heroic age. He caused the venerable Mucius Scævola, the chief of the Roman jurists, to be led before the pyre, and bade the sacrificer plunge a sword into his bosom. The wounded man was allowed, however, to be carried off by his friends, and under their care he recovered. It seems, however, most probable that this pretended sacrifice was no more than the drawing of a drop of blood to satisfy an ancient superstition. It is not likely that Fimbria would have suffered an act of real vengeance to remain incomplete.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Cinna effaces the last distinction between the Romans and the Italians—
 —Adjustment of debts—Sulla conducts the war against Mithridates—
 —Sack of Athens—Sulla overthrows Fimbria and Cinna, and returns to Italy—
 Burning of the Capitol—The younger Marius blockaded in Præneste—
 Carbo and Sertorius driven out of Italy—Overthrow of the Samnites—
 Fall of Præneste—Battle of the Colline Gate—Sulla enters Rome—His
 proscription of the Marian faction—Massacres and confiscations—Settlement
 of Sulla's veterans on Italian lands—Ruin of Etruria by Sulla—Employs
 Cn. Pompeius and spares C. Julius Cæsar.—(B.C. 86-82.)

MARIUS had died in January, almost at the commencement of his year of office. Cinna chose for his colleague Valerius Flaccus, the same who as consul fourteen years before had aided Marius to crush

the revolt of Saturninus. He set himself at once to fulfil his pledges to the allies. Censors were appointed to effect the complete emancipation of Italy, by suppressing the ten Italian tribes, and enrolling the new citizens of the Plautian law among the thirty-five tribes of the city. Thus the last remaining distinction between the Romans and the Italians was effaced for all who chose to accept the proffered privilege. The Samnites, the Lucanians, and others still scorned to adopt it. The consul proceeded to undertake another and more critical measure. He proclaimed an adjustment of debts, or the payment of one-fourth only. He exchanged, as the Romans phrased it, silver for copper; for the copper coin (the *as*) was made equivalent for the purpose to the silver sesterce, which then stood at four times its intrinsic value. After so long a series of wars and revolutions the measure may have been one of necessity. But the stroke was ominous; it did not fail to kindle criminal hopes among the dissolute and discontented for more than one generation. This done, Flaccus placed himself at the head of the legions destined for the Pontic war, and proceeded to the East, to watch or anticipate the movements of Sulla.

While Rome was completing her preparations Mithridates had been gaining enormous successes. Bithynia and Cappadocia had fallen into his hands. The Roman province of Asia, with the wealthy Ephesus for its capital, had succumbed, and in the prospect of relief from its Roman tax-gatherers had even received its new master with acclamations. From thence Mithridates had crossed the ~~the~~ *Ægean* Sea and accepted the submission of its flourishing islands, while his ~~admiral~~ *Archelaus*, had captured Athens itself, with its harbour in the Piræus, and all its naval equipments. The Greek cities for the most part regarded him as a deliverer. It was impossible to foresee how far the general disaffection might spread, and when Sulla landed on the eastern shore of the Adriatic his task had swelled to the re-conquest of one hemisphere of the empire.

Sulla had only quitted Italy in 87, while Marius was still a proscribed fugitive. Whether he thought the government he had set up in Rome sufficiently secure or not, he considered his own fortunes to depend more on the devotion of the legions he attached to his person than upon any civil institutions, and felt that for his private interests his place should be at the head of an army which he could gorge with plunder. With this view before him he could leave Rome to take care of itself. He reached Greece with a force of five legions, and he might expect at the end of the year to be superseded by another commander, the nominee, perhaps, of his

enemies. There was no time to be lost. Instead of checking the license of his soldiers he stimulated and secured them by more indulgence than ever. The course of his march he allowed to be marked by devastation and sacrilege. The sacred treasures of Epidaurus and Olympia fell into his hands. When the spirits of his troops were elated to the utmost he led them to the siege of Athens, broke through the long walls of Themistocles, and successively reduced the city and its port. The storm and sack of Athens were marked with more than the usual Roman barbarity. In Bœotia he encountered a vast army of Orientals in the open field and totally routed them at the great battle of Chæronea. Flaccus U.C. 668.
B.C. 86. was now advancing upon his steps, and summoning him to surrender his command. He was about to turn boldly against the intruder, when Mithridates threw a second armament within his reach. A second victory at Orchomenus broke the power of the king of Pontus, and compelled him to withdraw beyond the Ægean and leave Greece a clear stage for the mutual conflict of the two Roman armies. Meanwhile a mutiny broke out in the camp of the consul. Flaccus was assassinated. The soldiers placed Fimbria at their head, but, instead of measuring themselves with Sulla, required to be led into Asia and allowed to ransack the provinces. They encountered and dispersed some of the king's detachments, U.C. 669.
B.C. 85. and Mithridates himself would have fallen into their hands also at Pitane, but for the intervention of Sulla's lieutenant, Lucullus, who afforded him means of escape by sea. By this manœuvre Sulla secured the advantage of imposing his own terms upon him. On surrendering Bithynia and Cappadocia and the Roman province of Asia, with a large part of his fleets and treasures, he was admitted into amity and alliance with the republic. As soon as these matters were settled Sulla turned suddenly on Fimbria. Two Roman armies met in the field at Thyatira; but Fimbria's A.U. 670.
B.C. 84. soldiers were open to bribery: they deserted their standards and reduced their leader to extremity. He refused, however, the safe-conduct which was held out to him and fell upon his own sword.

At Rome the news of the death of Fimbria was accompanied by the announcement of Sulla's speedy return. Of the surrender of Mithridates little heed was taken. Sulla declared that on his arrival with thirty thousand veterans his foes and the foes of the republic, whom he classed together, should suffer condign chastisement. The Senate, no less than the populace, were terrified by this manifesto;

the vicissitudes of political conflict had filled half their benches with Marians, and the earlier party distinctions had become greatly obliterated. In Rome and throughout Italy both Cinna and Sulla relied rather upon personal than political connexions. The Senate, as an order in the state, could only pretend to mediate between rival chieftains. They sent a deputation to mollify the anger of the conqueror, while they forbade the consuls to arm for their own defence. Cinna and Carbo, the successors of Flaccus, disregarded their feeble interference, made new levies for themselves throughout Italy, and solicited the Samnites and Lucanians to join them. The Italians promised succour, but their levies refused to embark. Cinna led some troops across the Adriatic, but he was soon afterwards slain in his camp by his own mutinous soldiers. Carbo withheld the election of another colleague, and remained through the rest of the year sole consul. He sought to strengthen himself by enrolling large numbers of emancipated slaves in the tribes of the city. His brief usurpation was a career of violence. He hurled his enemies from the Tarpeian Rock, and expelled the tribunes from the city. Sulla had by this time assembled his troops at Dyrrachium, and immediately transported five legions into Italy. With this force of devoted veterans he despised any number of fresh levies which could be brought against him by such chiefs as Carbo and the son of Marius, by Carrinas, Cælius, and Sertorius, distracted as he knew them to be by mutual jealousies. If the Italians for the most part sided with the Marians, there was no concert among them. Sulla was enabled to detach their states one by one from the common cause. Meanwhile Metellus Pius raised his own standard in Liguria, and the young Pompeius in Picenum. The families of the victims of the recent proscription arrayed themselves in all quarters against the successor of Marius.

At this crisis an event, the origin of which was never discovered, threw the city into consternation. On the sixth of July (B.C. 83)

U.C. 671. the Capitol was consumed by fire; even the volumes of the
B.C. 83. Sibylline oracles, stored in its most secret recesses, were

devoured by the flames. This destruction of the sanctuary of the nation, and of the documents which directed its solemn counsels, seemed to announce an epoch in the destinies of Rome. 'Great was the era that was closing, and great was that which was commencing.'

Sulla marched triumphantly through Apulia and Campania, defeating one army and subverting the fidelity of another. At the commencement of 82, Carbo and the young Marius took possession

of the consulship; the one undertook to close the passes of the Apennines, and check Metellus and Pompeius in the north; the other to cover the approach to Latium against Sulla. Carbo ^{U.C. 672.} gained some partial successes, but Marius, after collecting a ^{B.C. 82.} mass of plunder at Præneste, met his assailant at no further distance than Sacriportus, where he suffered a defeat, retired within his strong position, and left the road to Rome open to a daring enemy. Sulla was content to watch Præneste, while he hastened in person to attack Carbo in Etruria, who was now enclosed between three opponents. Carbo had posted himself at Clusium, on the Clanis, and with the help of Etruscan and other allies maintained his position with intrepidity. He fought more than one battle and gained some partial successes, while he strove to effect a junction with the Samnites who advanced to his relief. He was at last defeated with great loss at Faventia, near Ravenna, where he had flung himself desperately upon Metellus. His cause was from this time hopeless, but he still carried on an irregular warfare in the Apennines till he found an opportunity of escaping into Africa. Sertorius had already withdrawn into Spain. The Marian chieftains surrendered Italy to Sulla, and sought to raise the provinces against him.

Præneste, indeed, with the young Marius, still held out, but under blockade or close observation. The Samnites, with the indomitable Pontius at their head, had not yet abandoned their arms. But there was little sympathy and still less concert between these powers. Pontius found means of passing the flank of the Sullan armies before Præneste, and made a rush on Rome. The city was never in such imminent peril since the days of Brennus, though any permanent occupation was not to be feared. But Sulla was equal to the crisis. On the first of November the Samnites advanced, but he was already at their back. At the Colline Gate he came up with them, and engaged them in a desperate encounter. The left wing, commanded by Sulla himself, was put to rout; but Crassus meanwhile, with the right, had broken the enemy's ranks, and pursued them as far as Antemnæ. Eight thousand Italians were made prisoners, and the Roman officers captured in their ranks were put to the sword. Pontius Telesinus, grievously wounded in the fight, was slain by the conqueror on the field of battle. His whole life had been devoted to the hatred of Rome, but he was the last of her Italian enemies. As the adversary of the Decii and the Fabii he might have been her destroyer, and have changed the face of history. But in the age of Marius and Sulla he could only hope for one day

of plunder and conflagration, and when this was denied him he might be content to die among fifty thousand brave men, of whom a full half were Romans.

The Prænestines had indulged for a moment in the belief that their foe was defeated, but when they saw the heads of the Italians and the Marians paraded before them they opened their gates to the conquerors. The young Marius had retired to a covert underground with the brother of Pontius the Samnite. Determined not to fall into the enemy's hands, they challenged each other to the combat, and Marius, having slain his associate, caused himself to be dispatched by a slave. A few cities still held out. At Norba, in Latium, the inhabitants chose to consume their city, rather than sur-

render it. Nola opened its gates after a long defence. Volaterræ resisted for two years. But the struggle in Italy came finally to a close. Spain and Africa rose, indeed, against the Roman government, but their efforts were ineffectual to prolong the contest in the peninsula.

Events and circumstances had developed Sulla's policy. In his early years he had surprised his countrymen by his success in warfare, and his influence with the soldiers. The haughty jealousy of Marius had disposed him to take an opposite part in public life. The rivalry of the two great captains had been enhanced by the contrast between their manners, origin, and connexions. Brooding over his personal resentments, Sulla had come insensibly to identify himself with the cause of the oligarchy. The sanguinary violence of Marius and Cinna had irritated the champion of the persecuted faction, and he had vowed no less bloody vengeance against the authors of the proscriptions. But the opposition he encountered in Italy expanded his views beyond the limits of mere party warfare. The Etrurians and the Samnites transformed him from the chief of a Roman faction into the head of the Roman nation. The vows they had breathed against the city and the people sank into his mind. He had displayed in the East his contempt for the just claims of the provincials. The cries of the wretched Greeks and Asiatics he had mocked with pitiless scorn, and had loaded them again with the chains from which they hoped to have been freed by Mithridates. The man who had re-conquered Greece had now re-conquered Italy. He would enforce a similar policy in the one case and the other.

The morning after the battle of the Colline Gate Sulla was haranguing the Senate in the temple of Bellona. As an emperor

commanding a military force the law forbade him to enter the city, and the senators attended his summons beyond the walls. Violent and piteous cries were heard in the distance. 'No matter,' he calmly remarked to the senators; 'it is only some rascals whom I have ordered to be punished.' They were the death-cries of the 8,000 Samnite prisoners whom he had brought to be cut in pieces by his soldiers in the Campus Martius. He soon turned his blows from the Italians upon the Romans. On his return from Præneste he mounted the rostra and addressed the people. He vaunted his own greatness and irresistible power, and graciously assured them that he would be good to them if they obeyed him well; but to his foes he would give no quarter, to high as well as low, prætors, quæstors, tribunes, and whosoever had provoked his indignation.

These words were in fact a signal to his creatures, and before the names of the required victims had been made public many a private vengeance was wreaked and many a claim made on the conqueror's gratitude. The family of Marius was among the first to be attacked. One of his relatives, Marius Gratidianus, was pursued by Catilina and murdered with cruel torments. The corpse of the great warrior himself, which had been buried and not burnt, was torn from its sepulchre on the banks of the Anio, and cast into the stream. This desecration of funeral rites was an impiety hitherto unknown in the contests of the Romans. It was the more deeply felt by a shocked and offended people. The troubled ghost, according to the poet Lucan, continued to haunt the spot and scared the peasant from his labour on the eve of impending revolutions.

A great number of victims had already perished when Catulus demanded of Sulla in the Senate how far the sacrifice must extend. Thereupon a list of proscriptions appeared containing eighty names. This caused a general murmur; nevertheless, two days later, 230, and the next day as many more, were added. Nor would the tyrant yet declare that with these he should be finally satisfied: 'By and by he might remember more.' Rewards were offered for slaying the proscribed; it was declared capital to harbour them. Their fortunes were confiscated or abandoned to their assassins; their descendants made incapable of public office. Nor were the proscriptions confined to residents at Rome; they were extended
U.C. 672.
B.C. 82.
to every city in Italy. From December 82 to June of the year following this system of authorised murder was allowed to continue. Catilina, who had previously assassinated a brother, now got his victim's name placed on the fatal list in order to secure his

estate. The favourites of Sulla, his slaves and freedmen, sold the right of inscribing the names of the persons whom any one wished to destroy. The dignity of public vengeance was prostituted to private pique and cupidity. Such were the murmurs which long resounded among the Roman people at the use and abuse of the terrible proscriptions.

Sulla might smile to see the number of accomplices he had associated in his crimes, and he made these more conspicuous by the rewards with which he loaded them. Many of them were men whom he might expect to become prominent afterwards. On Catilina, the boldest and most unscrupulous of all, a man of blasted character and ruined fortunes, as he is represented to us, he heaped golden favours. The young Crassus, who had narrowly escaped the sword of Marius, now laid the foundation of the wealth which earned him the renown of 'the richest of the Romans.' Cnæus Pompeius had executed without remorse his master's vengeance upon captives taken in arms; at his command he had consented to divorce his wife Antistia and take Sulla's step-daughter Metella; but he at least withdrew his hand from the stain of the proscriptions. Caius Julius Cæsar, then a youth of eighteen, was connected by blood with Marius, and by marriage with Cinna. Sulla contented himself with requiring him to repudiate his wife. Cæsar refused, and fled into the Sabine mountains. The assassins were on his track, while his friends at Rome exerted themselves to the utmost to obtain his pardon. The Vestals interceded for him. Some of Sulla's own adherents raised their voices in his favour, and pleaded his youth, his careless temper and dissipated habits, in proof of his innocence or his harmlessness. 'I spare him,' answered Sulla; 'but beware! In that young trifler there is more than one Marius.' Cæsar was saved; but he prudently withdrew from the scene of danger, and repaired to the East, where he served at the siege of Mitylene, which still held out for Mithridates.

The proscriptions were lists of selected victims; and though hundreds undoubtedly perished whose names had never been publicly designated, yet the numbers that fell in these massacres were not beyond the reach of computation. Our accounts, indeed, vary; but of senators were slain perhaps from one to two hundred, of knights between two and three thousand. The victims of a lower class may have been much more numerous. But the destruction of the Italians was far more sweeping and indiscriminate. Cities were dismantled and even razed to the ground; their lands were distri-

buted among Sulla's veterans, of whom 120,000 were settled in colonies from one end of the peninsula to the other. The Samnite people, according to the popular tradition, were utterly annihilated. Of all their cities Beneventum alone, it is said, was left standing. These, no doubt, are immense exaggerations. But the people of Præneste, we must believe, were slaughtered wholesale. The Etrurians suffered little less. The great centre of their ancient civilisation had long fallen into decay; but a new class of towns had risen on their ruins, and attained to wealth and celebrity. Of these Spoletum, Volaterræ, Interamna, and Fæsulæ were delivered to Roman colonists; Fæsulæ itself was dismantled, and the new city of Florentia erected with the fragments of its ruins. Throughout large districts the population entirely changed; everywhere the chief people perished from off the face of the land, and with them most that was distinctive in the manners and institutions, and even in the language of the country. The civilisation of Etruria disappeared from the sight of men, to be re-discovered at the end of twenty centuries among the buried tombs of forgotten Lucumons.

The same exterminating policy extended also to the provinces, wherever any symptoms of discontent had been manifested. Sulla had chastised Greece and Asia with a rod of iron. He now directed his officers to chase his enemies from the retreats to which they had been invited in Sicily, Africa, Gaul, and Spain. Metellus fell upon the Cisalpine, another Flaccus devastated the Narbonensis, Pompeius was sent to punish the provinces of the South, and Annius was deputed to follow Sertorius into Spain. At the same time the republic was threatened with a renewal of her foreign warfare. The Thracians, never yet subdued, troubled the frontiers of Macedonia; Mithridates was commencing a new movement in Asia; the harassed population of the Eastern coasts had betaken itself in vast numbers to the waters, and infested the bays of Greece and Italy itself with fleets of pirate-vessels. The mountains of Etruria and Sabellia, of Samnium and Lucania, swarmed with miserable fugitives from spoliation and slaughter, while armed bands roamed beneath the walls of populous cities, ready to carry off any booty that fell in their way, and rendering life and property everywhere insecure. Even the proprietors of estates leagued themselves with these wretched outcasts, and employed them to kidnap free citizens of the republic, to be buried as slaves in their forests or chained in their factories. Such is the picture, which we dare not consider overcharged, of the state to which the civilised empire of the Romans

had been reduced by their political system and the atrocities it had engendered.

Sulla had returned to Rome laden with the spoils of war; his troops had been gorged with plunder, and he could not plead for his proscriptions the claims of a dissatisfied soldiery. But the accumulating troubles of the empire, and the increasing armaments required in every quarter, demanded the opening of new sources of revenue. The provinces, long harassed by war, were now crushed by imposts. Treaties and promises were alike disregarded. All were forced to contribute, not only the states regularly assessed, but even those which had acquired by their services immunity and independence. To satisfy the requisitions made upon them many cities were constrained to pledge their public lands, their temples, their ports, and even the stones of their walls. Sulla sold the sovereignty of the independent kingdom of Egypt to Ptolemy Alexander II., requiring him in turn to leave it by will to the Roman people. Donations were demanded of foreign kings and potentates. The revolution in the capital extended its shock to the farthest limits where the name of Rome was known; and the restoration of the ancient republic which her conqueror pretended to effect required the efforts and sacrifices, not of her own parties and factions only, but of her subjects, her allies, and her dependents.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

The Consul Carbo put to death in Sicily by Pompeius—Sulla appointed dictator, without limit of time—He reconstitutes the republic in the interest of the oligarchy—He reconstructs the Senate, gives to it supreme legislative authority, restores to it the judicia, and curtails the power of the tribunes—Further legislation of Sulla—Evil effect of his military colonies—Sumptuary laws—Sulla resigns the dictatorship—His fanatical belief in his own good fortune—His death—Review of the spirit of Sulla's policy—Its inefficiency and speedy overthrow—His military services great and durable.—(B.C. 82–78.)

THE reign of violence and anarchy dated from the victory of the Colline Gate, the 1st of November (B.C. 82). While the young

A.C. 672. Marius and his colleague still occupied the consular office
B.C. 82. the actual master of Rome could have no legal authority within the city. He was proconsul, he was imperator, he was

omnipotent in his own camp, but he had no right to enter the walls. He set up his prætorium in the Campus, surrounded by his armed soldiers, raised far above the laws, and yet paying an appearance of respect to the letter while he trampled under foot their spirit. The death of Marius a few days later rendered vacant one of the consuls' chairs. Carbo, who claimed to occupy the other, did not very long survive, being captured in Sicily and executed by Pompeius, without regard to his rank or office. Before the close of the year the republic was left without a chief magistrate. The Senate appointed L. Flaccus, one of Sulla's officers, interrex, to complete the remainder of the term: it does not appear whether the consuls for the ensuing year had been already, as usual, designated. However this may be, Flaccus, prompted by his general, proceeded to recommend the creation of a dictator. The Senate obeyed, the people acquiesced, and after an interval of a hundred and twenty years, which had elapsed since the era of Q. Fabius Maximus, the citizens beheld once more the four-and-twenty lictors who invested with invidious splendour the union of civil and military pre-eminence. The dictatorship, they might remember, had been the rare resource of the patricians in ancient times, when they roused themselves to defend their hateful privileges against the just claims of the plebeians; but since the rights of either class had been happily blended together the office itself had ceased to have any significance. To revive it now, when no enemy was at the gates, was only to threaten the commons with a new oligarchical revolution, to menace rights and liberties acquired in a struggle of two hundred years, on which the greatness of Rome was confessedly founded. But all these misgivings were hushed. The people crouched beneath the sword of the conqueror and the acclamations of the nobles, who relied on his stern resolution to crush the tribunes and repel the advances of democracy. Even the limit of six months, which the law had assigned to the duration of this extraordinary despotism, was now disregarded. Sulla was required to reconstitute the commonwealth. He was allowed to fix for himself the period he should require, nor less the principles and the means he should adopt. The Romans solemnly divested themselves of all their political rights, so long as the great reformer should deem it expedient to play the tyrant over them. To Sulla they gave unlimited power over citizens and subjects, of amercing his enemies and rewarding his friends, of building cities or destroying them, of giving kingdoms away or incorporating them with the empire. The supremacy of the new dictator was no less

marked by the appointment at the same time of consuls who could act only as his lieutenants. He allowed the comitia to elect M. Tullius Decula and Cn. Dolabella for the year 81. The year after he assumed the fasces himself in conjunction with Metellus Pius, and was again elected while still retaining the dictatorship for 79; but this time he declined the office.

Proscription and massacre had cleared the ground for the social construction that was to follow. With a blind and arrogant predilection for the traditionary forms of the primitive municipality, the dictator resolved to restore, as far as circumstances could be forced thereto, the civil ascendancy of the old Roman families. To re-enact, indeed, the letter of the ancient constitution was impossible; but he hoped at least to reanimate its spirit. His temper, however, was too vehement for an undertaking requiring the most delicate management. His reforms were bold and decisive; but they were adopted with no consideration for the genuine tendencies of society, and they struck no root in the minds of the people. Sulla, we have seen, had cut off two hundred senators by his proscriptions: Marius had probably slaughtered an equal number. The remnant had been decimated on the field of battle. To replenish this frightful void the dictator selected three hundred from the equestrian order; but such men could hardly restore the lustre of the great council of state, which had owed its authority mainly to the personal eminence of its members. We may conjecture that the number of the body thus reconstructed amounted to about 400. The vacancies which thenceforth occurred were probably more than supplied by the regular succession of men who had filled certain high offices. Twenty quæstors were elected annually, and these passed into the Senate in due rotation. About thirty years later the senators are found to be not less than 500 in number.

The principle of hereditary admission to the Senate was never recognised under the Roman republic, but the practical restriction of the great offices from which it was replenished to one or two hundred families, allowed none of the chief houses to remain unrepresented in the great council. To these houses Sulla wished to confine the entire legislation of the State. He repealed the *lex Hortensia*, by which the resolutions of the tribes received the force of law. To the Senate he transferred once more exclusive possession of the *judicia*, while he extended the authority of the *quæstiones perpetuæ*, or standing commissions for the trial of political offences, to a large class of criminal cases, which had hitherto fallen

under the cognisance of the popular assemblies. He deprived the tribunes of the right of proposing measures in the assembly of the tribes, forbade them to exercise their veto on the legislation of the Senate, and restricted their protectorate of the plebs to relief in a few trifling cases of civil or criminal procedure. The holder of their office was declared incapable of succeeding to any of the chief magistracies. Ambitious men would disdain a place which thus condemned them to subsequent effacement. By the disparagement of its leaders the assembly of the tribes would lose its real power. It would be reduced to the election of certain inferior officers only. As for the comitia of the centuries, Sulla seems to have deemed it useless to restore the complicated machinery of the classes and qualification by property. He allowed it to retain the election to the higher magistracies, but he relied at the same time on the influence of wealth and dignity in breaking down the independence of the electors. He took from the people the appointment to the college of pontiffs, and placed the great political engine of the state-religion in the hands of a self-elective aristocratic corporation.

The Senate thus planted one foot on the neck of the knights, the other on that of the commons. Sulla determined to render it independent of the censorship, which the rival party had used to purge it for their own purposes. Accordingly he forbade the censors to revise the lists during their tenure of power, nor, indeed, was their venerable office revived for several years. At a later period its occasional revival was always a symptom of popular reaction. Meanwhile the slaughter of the civil war had caused an alarming decline of the old Roman population. It was necessary to recruit it, and on this account perhaps the dictator abstained from closing the franchise against the Italians. Dispersed among the thirty-five tribes they could exert little weight in the elections. He showed his contempt for the needy and venal populace by the enfranchisement at one stroke of ten thousand slaves of the proscribed and murdered citizens. Left without masters, they would have endangered the public tranquillity, but as citizens they might become themselves masters in turn, and help to keep the oppressed and discontented in subjection, both at home and abroad. Inscribed on the list of the Cornelian gens, they might at least devote themselves to the policy of the dictator, who had placed himself at the head of that illustrious house. It is to the influx of this spurious element that we owe, no doubt, so many Corneli

more or less distinction, whom we encounter in the later history of the republic and the empire.

The establishment of military colonies was one of the dictator's most important measures. Besides satisfying claims he dared not disregard, he might hope to make these plantations the bulwark of his reforms. If so, we shall presently see how much he miscalculated their effect. But the change they produced in the social and political aspect of Italy was neither light nor transient. A hundred and twenty thousand legionaries, as we have seen, received lands in the most fertile parts of the peninsula, together with the franchise of the city. This was carrying out an agrarian law more sweeping and far more arbitrary than the Gracchi had ventured to conceive. But these same legionaries, thus pampered and enriched, became the most restless and dangerous members of the body politic, idle as husbandmen, discontented as citizens, too old to encumber themselves with family ties, bred to violence, and reckless in all seasons of public disturbance.

Besides its grand political bearings, the legislation of Sulla descended to minute particulars of social and civil economy. His enemies had revelled in the enjoyment of several successive consulships; he forbade any magistrate to fill the same office twice within ten years. As regarded the proconsular imperium, the fruitful source of lawless ambitions, he enacted a law of treason (*majestas*), which defined the crimes of leaving the provinces, leading forth the legions, and attacking foreign potentates without express command of the Senate and people. He recurred blindly to the ancient tradition that the moral character of a people can be sustained by sumptuary laws. Accordingly he tried to limit the luxuries of the wealthy, fixing the precise sums which might be expended on the pleasures of the table, and even the prices of the articles which should be consumed. Such laws could not outlast even the brief rule of the legislator himself. They are only worth noticing, perhaps, as an instance of the spirit in which the Romans constantly acted, in regarding the habits of antiquity as principles of general expediency, the same spirit which animated much of the later legislation of the empire also.

But however rigid were the rules on which Sulla professed to act, he was never master of his own caprices and violence. Various are the stories told of his contempt in his own person for the laws which he had himself enacted, as well as of the ill-temper and cruelty with which he asserted his will against those who thwarted it. Mean-

while the success of his ambitious schemes, the overthrow of his opponents, the complete restoration, as he imagined, of the principles he had asserted, all combined to work upon a mind prone to superstitious fatalism, and changed him from a jealous partisan into an arrogant fanatic. Sulla claimed to be the favourite of Fortune, the only divinity in whom he really believed. By resigning power at the moment of its highest exaltation he sought to escape the impending Nemesis which haunted him with the prospect of a fatal reverse. In the year 79 Sulla abdicated the dictatorship.

A.U. 675.

He could say that it had been given him for the reconstitution of the commonwealth, and that done, it ceased to belong to him. But if the Romans were amazed at this act of self-devotion, it was with awe that they beheld the tyrant descend from his blood-stained tribunal and retire with unmoved composure to the privacy of a suburban villa. Aged and infirm, and sated perhaps with pleasure as well as with power, we may believe that he was careless of life, and little troubled by the risk he might incur from the daggers of assassins. He might trust something to the terror of his name, something to the fortitude of his adherents; he might reflect that private assassination had been ever foreign to the habits of the Roman politicians. But the effects of a career of gross debauchery were increasing upon him. He renounced public life only when his strength and spirits were rapidly failing him. Surrounded by buffoons and dancers, he indulged to the last in every sensual excess of which he was capable. Yet he did not wholly abandon literature. He amused himself with poring over Aristotle and Theophrastus, and dictated memoirs of his own life almost in his dying moments. In those pages he recorded how astrologers had assured him that it was his fate to die after a happy life at the height of his prosperity. Stained with the blood of so many thousands, and tormented with a loathsome disease, his entrails corrupting and breeding vermin, in this faith he persisted to the last, and quitted life without remorse or repining. He believed that a deceased son appeared to him in a vision and entreated him to rest from his troubles, and go with him to regain his lost consort, Metella, and dwell with her in eternal tranquillity. Fearful perhaps of the fate of Marius, he directed his body to be burnt, whereas burial had been the common custom of his house. A monument was erected to him

U.C. 676.

B.C. 79.

in the Campus Martius, which was standing in the time of Plutarch, two centuries after. It bore an inscription, attributed to Sulla himself which said that none of his friends ever did him a kindness;

and none of his foes a wrong, without being largely requited. Sulla survived his abdication about twelve months, and died in the 676th year of the city (B.C. 78), at the age of sixty.

Slowly and with many a painful struggle had the Roman commonwealth outgrown the limits of a rustic municipality. The few hundred families which formed the nucleus of her citizenship, and which in her earliest days had sufficed for all the functions of her government, had been compelled to incorporate allies and rivals in their own body, to expand their institutions, and enlarge their views. The main object of Sulla's policy was to revive the spirit of the old restrictions. The ancient families themselves had almost wholly perished; he replaced them with a newer growth, but he would have confined the government of the empire to this small section of the people. The attempt was blind and bigoted; it was not less futile than unjust. It contravened the essential principle of national growth, still more so of imperial development. Nevertheless this legislation was undoubtedly supported by a vast mass of existing prejudice, and that not among those only who were interested in its success. Any attempt to enlarge the limits of the constitution was opposed to popular tradition; it may be doubted whether even the philosophy of the day was ripe for it. It would have been abhorrent from the ideas of Plato or Aristotle; and the broader teaching of the Stoics was theoretical rather than practical, and such as it was had the slightest possible acceptance even among the public men of Rome at this period. Such an attempt had no foundation in current argument, nor in any sense of right as right was then understood. With many, no doubt, of his ablest contemporaries Sulla mistook for the laws of nature the institutions of an obsolete expediency. But nature was carrying on a great work, and proved too strong for art. Ten years sufficed to overthrow the whole structure of this reactionary legislation. The champions of a more liberal policy sprang up in constant succession, and contributed unconsciously to the great work of union and comprehension, which was everywhere in rapid progress. The spirit of isolation which had split Greece and Italy into a hundred separate communities, and fostered every casual discrepancy of character by reserved and jealous institutions, was about to yield to a general yearning for social and moral unity. Providence was preparing mankind for the reception of one law and one religion; and for this consummation the nations were to be trained by the steady progress of the Roman empire.

But though Sulla's main policy was to be thus speedily overthrown, he had not lived in vain. As dictator he wasted his strength in attempting what, if successful, would have destroyed his country; but as proconsul he had saved her. The tyranny of the Roman domination had set the provinces in a blaze. Mithridates had fanned the flame. Greece and Asia had revolted. The genius of the king of Pontus might have consolidated an empire such as Xerxes might have envied on both shores of the *Ægean* sea. But at this crisis of her fate, hardly less imminent than when Hannibal was reviving the hostility of the Gauls and Samnites, Rome had confided her fortunes to the prowess of Sulla. The victory of Chæronea checked the dissolution of the empire. The invader was hurled back across the *Ægean*; the cities of Greece returned reluctantly to their obedience, never more to be seduced from it. Sulla followed Mithridates into Asia; one by one he recovered the Eastern provinces of the republic. He bound his foe by treaties to meddle no more with their discontents. He left his officers to enforce his decrees, and quartered the armies of Rome upon the miserable populations. The crisis was averted, though it took twenty years more to subdue the power of Mithridates and reduce Asia to passive submission. Rome was relieved from the last of her foreign invaders, and this was the great work of Sulla which deserved to immortalise him in her annals.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Renewal of civil wars—Revolt of the Iberians under Sertorius, and maritime confederacy of the pirates—The government of the provinces by the proconsuls—General system of extortion and plunder—Impoverishment of the provincials by usury—Political impeachments—History of C. Verres as an example of provincial misgovernment—General relaxation of morality.

THE spoil of the provinces had been the bait with which the popular leaders had lured the Italians to their standards. All the legal rights of citizenship had been conceded, but the old oligarchic families, dignified by historic associations, and enriched by centuries of conquest, still hoped to maintain their grasp of the honours and emoluments which they made accessible only to the wealthiest. They still looked with scorn themselves, and infused the same sentiment into their inferiors, on the *new men*—the men of talents and

education, but of moderate origin and fortune—who were striving on all sides to thrust themselves into public notice. The *judicia* were the great instruments by which they protected their monopoly; for by keeping these in their own hands they could quash every attempt to reveal by legal process the enormities of their provincial administration. But as far as each party succeeded in retaining or extorting a share in the plunder the same system was carried on by both. We cannot point to either the *optimates* or the *commons* as exceeding the other in rapacity and injustice. The distress and alienation of the provinces became the pressing evil of the times. For the most part the Italians were now satisfied, but in more than one quarter beyond the peninsula the old struggle of the Social wars was about to be renewed. The second period of the Civil wars of Rome opens with the revolt of the Spaniards in the West and the maritime confederacy of the pirates in the East. Ambitious or turbulent citizens found a mass of discontent around them from which they could always derive direct assistance, or meet at least with sullen approbation.

The original vice of the provincial administration consisted in the avowed principle that the native races were to be regarded as conquered subjects. The government, civil and military, was quartered upon the inhabitants. Houses and establishments were provided for it at the cost of the provincials. The proconsul's outfit or *vasarium* was perhaps generally defrayed by a grant from the public treasury; but the charge required for his maintenance, and that of his retinue, entitled *salarium*, was laid upon the local revenues. The proconsul himself, indeed, was supposed, in strictness, to serve the state gratuitously as a public duty, but practically he was left to remunerate himself by any indirect means of extortion he chose to adopt. As the supreme judicial as well as military authority there was no appeal against either the edicts he issued or the interpretation he put upon them. The legions in occupation of the province were maintained at free quarters, and their daily pay supplied by the contributions of the inhabitants. The landowners were burdened with a tithe or other rate upon their produce as a tribute to the conquering city. This payment was made generally by a composition, in which the proconsul was instructed to drive the hardest bargain he could for his employers. The local revenues were raised for the most part by direct taxes and customs' dues; and these were usually farmed by Roman contractors, who made large fortunes from the transaction. Public opinion at home was

such as rather to stimulate than to check their extortions. For it was a settled maxim of Roman policy that every talent extracted from the provincial for the enrichment of his rulers was a transfer of so much of the sinews of war to the state from its enemies. But the rulers of the world were not content with the extortion of money from their subjects. An era of taste in art had dawned upon the rude conquerors, and every proconsul, quæstor, and tribune was smitten with the desire to bring home trophies of Greek and Asiatic culture. Those among them who cared to ingratiate themselves with their fellow-citizens sought out the choicest statues and pictures, and even the marble columns of edifices, for the decoration of public places in the city. They did not scruple to violate the temples, and ransomed rebellious cities for the plunder of their favourite divinities. The thirst for these spoils led to acts of hateful cruelty; where persuasion failed, punishments and tortures were used. The proconsul and his officers were all bound together in a common cause, and the impunity of the subordinates was repaid by zeal for the interests of their chiefs. Of those who could refrain from open violence, and withhold their hands from the plunder of temples and palaces, few could deny themselves the sordid gains of usury. The demands of the government were enforced without compunction, and communities were repeatedly driven to pledge their revenues to Roman money-lenders. The law permitted the usurer to recover his dues by the severest process. In a celebrated instance the agent of one of the most honourable men at Rome could shut up the senators of a provincial town in their curia, till five of them actually died of starvation, to recover the debts due to his principal.

When, indeed, their tyranny reached its height the province might sometimes enjoy the sweets of revenge, though with little prospect of redress or of security for the future. In a government by parties the misdeeds of one set of men will often rouse the indignation of their rivals; and while the factions of Rome contended for prerogatives of conquest, they tried to brand each other with the guilt of abusing them. The domination of the senators, as established by Sulla, soon provoked the jealous animadversion of their excluded opponents. Their administration of the provinces, protected as it was by the tribunals in which they reigned supreme, presented a memorable point of attack, and against the crimes of the Senatorial proconsuls the deadliest shafts of the popular orators were directed. The remains of Roman eloquence have preserved for us more than

one full-length portrait of a provincial tyrant. We cannot, indeed, rely upon the fidelity of the colouring, or even the correctness of the lines; nevertheless their general effect is amply supported by many independent testimonies.

About the period of Sulla's abdication a young noble, named Caius Verres, accompanied the prætor Dolabella to his government of Cilicia. At Sicyon in Achaia, as he passed along, he thought fit to demand a sum of money of the chief magistrate of the city, and being refused, shut him up in a close chamber, with a fire of green wood, to extort the gratuity he required. From the same place he carried off several of the finest sculptures and paintings. At Athens he shared with his chief the plunder of the temple of Minerva; at Delos, that of Apollo; at Chios, Erythræa, Halicarnassus, and elsewhere on his route, he perpetrated similar acts of rapine. Samos possessed a temple celebrated throughout Asia; Verres rifled both the temple and the city itself. The Samians complained to the governor of Asia; they were recommended to carry their complaints to Rome. Perga boasted a statue of Diana coated with gold; Verres scraped off the gilding. Miletus offered him the escort of one of her finest vessels; he detained it for his own use and sold it. At Lampsacus he sought to dishonour the daughter of the first citizen of the place; her father and brother ventured to defend her, and slew one of his attendants. Verres seized the pretext to accuse them both of an attempt on his life, and the governor of the province obliged him by cutting off both their heads. Such were the atrocities of the young ruffian, while yet a mere dependent of the proconsul, with no charge or office of his own. Being appointed quæstor, he extended his exactions over every district of the province, and speedily amassed, by the avowal of his own principal, from two to three millions of sesterces beyond the requisitions of the public service.

Verres could now pay for his election to the prætorship in the city. For one year he dispensed his favourable judgments to wealthy suitors at home, and on its termination sailed for the province of Sicily. Here his conduct on the tribunal was marked by the most glaring venality. He sold everything, both his patronage and his decisions, making sport of the laws of the country and of his own edicts; of the religion, the fortunes, and the lives of the provincials. During the three years of his government not a single senator of the sixty-five cities of the island was elected without a gratuity to the proprætor. He imposed arbitrary requisitions of

many hundred thousand bushels of grain upon the communities already overburdened with their authorised tithes. He distributed cities among his creatures with the air of a Persian despot : Lipara he gave to a boon-companion, Segesta to an actress, Herbita to a courtesan. These exactions threatened to depopulate the country. At the period of his arrival the territory of Leontium possessed eighty-three farms ; in the third year of the Verrine administration only thirty-two remained in occupation. At Motya the number of tenanted estates had fallen from a hundred and eighty-eight to a hundred and one ; at Herbita, from two hundred and fifty-seven to a hundred and twenty ; at Argyrona, from two hundred and fifty to eighty. Throughout the province more than one-half of the cultivated lands were abandoned, as if the scourge of war or pestilence had passed over the island.

But Verres was an amateur and an antiquary, and had a taste for art as well as a thirst for lucre. At every city where he stopped on his progresses he extorted gems, vases, and trinkets from his hosts, or from any inhabitant whom he understood to possess them. No one ventured to complain. There was no redress even for a potentate in alliance with the republic, such as Antiochus, king of Syria, who was thus robbed of a splendid candelabrum enriched with jewels, which he was about to dedicate in the Capitol at Rome. All these objects of art were sent off to Italy to decorate the villa of the proprætor. Nor were the antiques and curiosities he thus amassed less valuable than the ornaments of gold and silver. Finally, Verres laid his hands on certain statues of Ceres and Diana, the special objects of worship among the natives, who were only allowed the consolation of coming to offer them their sacrifices in his garden. Nor did the extortion of Verres fall upon the Sicilians only. He cheated the treasury at Rome of the sums advanced to him in payment of corn for the consumption of the city. He withheld the necessary equipments from the fleet which he was directed to send against the pirates, and applied them to his own use. The fleet was worsted by the enemy, and Verres caused its officers to be executed for cowardice. He crowned his enormities by punishing one of the ruling caste with death. Gavius, a Roman trader, he had confined in the quarries of Syracuse. The man escaped, was retaken, and fastened to a cross on the beach within sight of Italy, that he might address to his native shores the ineffectual cry, 'I am a Roman citizen.'

Such is a specimen of the charges which could be advanced

by a spirited accuser like Cicero against a Roman officer, and which the criminal, though backed by the united influence of his party and defended by Hortensius, its leading advocate, shrank from meeting. Generally, however, the governor accused of tyranny or malversation could screen himself by bribing his judges, who, besides their natural anxiety to absolve one of their own order from crimes which might in truth be imputed to themselves, had been bred in the same school of corruption as himself. The prosecution of these charges became, indeed, a ready means of acquiring notoriety; and the people, stimulated by their demagogues, encouraged the young orators in their attacks, 'as whelps are trained to hunt down beasts of prey.' But the assailants were almost always repulsed, and even if they succeeded the provinces reaped no benefit from their efforts. The provincials only exerted themselves the more to grasp the means of securing their acquittal. They could boast that three years of office would suffice: the first to make their own fortunes, the second to reward their followers, the third to purchase the suffrages of their judges.

These frightful iniquities, which rendered the dominion of Rome as formidable to the nations in peace as her hostility in war, had grown with her luxury and corruption. Her provincial governors had ever wielded their rule with harshness and arrogance; but in purer ages they had at least refrained from the sordid exactions and rapacity for which they had now become infamous. The tribunals also had degenerated. The knights could venture to assert that during the forty years they had participated in the dispensation of the laws the justice of Rome had been maintained. To the notorious venality of the tribunals under the administration of the Senate they pointed in proof of their own superior purity. It was indeed true that the increasing vices of the provincial government were symptomatic of the growing relaxation of morality at home. On the one hand, the extension of foreign conquest and the opening in every quarter of new sources of wealth had inflamed both cupidity and ambition. On the other, half a century of domestic contentions had loosened the bonds of society, overbearing the ancient principles of justice, of respect for law and order, of reverence for things divine. But in fact this greater development of vice was accompanied at the same time by more general publicity, and a more jealous exposure of the faults of political parties. The knights, deterred from the use of force for the recovery of their

lost privileges, affected a zeal for justice to undermine their more fortunate rivals. The constitution of Sulla was assailed, and eventually overthrown, not on the field of battle, but on the floor of the law-courts.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Chiefs of the oligarchy, Metellus Pius, Catulus, and Lepidus—Pompeius a soldier of fortune—Revolt of Lepidus—His defeat and death—Revolt of Sertorius in Spain—He defeats Metellus, who is replaced by Pompeius—He is assassinated by Perperna—The revolt quelled by Pompeius—The popular party reassert their claims in the city—General incapacity of the oligarchical government—Outbreak of the gladiators in Campania, under Spartacus, finally crushed by Pompeius—Policy of Pompeius in Iberia and Gaul—He returns to Rome, and is elected consul before the legal age, with M. Crassus for his colleague—Character and first appearance of C. Julius Cæsar in public life.—(B.C. 78—70.)

THE abdication of Sulla left the field open to a new generation of statesmen. The dictator had reigned alone. The civil wars and the proscriptions had lopped the heads of every Roman faction. Sertorius and Perperna were among the most prominent of the subordinate officers of the Marian party. These men had made their escape into Spain, and had raised there the standard of revolt against the republic itself. The Senate might still count upon its list the illustrious names of a Metellus, a Catulus, and a Lepidus, but none of these, though conspicuous for their family nobility, were men of commanding powers or extensive influence in public affairs. Metellus, surnamed Pius, now between fifty and sixty years of age, had done the nobles good service in the war with Marius. Though his victories had been chequered by defeats, Sulla chose him, as the ablest of his officers, to defend the republic and the Senatorial government against Sertorius. Q. Lutatius Catulus was the son of the colleague of Marius in the campaign against the Cimbri, about ten years younger than Metellus, and highly esteemed for his civic virtues. He was admired and trusted by the nobles, and at the same time his temper and discretion raised him above the ordinary character of party statesmen. M. Lepidus, on the other hand, a man of the highest birth and family distinction, the head of the illustrious Æmilian gens, failed nevertheless to secure the confidence of the Senate. He had connected himself by marriage with the popular party, and from an early period it was surmised that he

would be tempted to desert to it. Lepidus was about fifty years of age. Lucullus and Crassus, ten years his juniors, had also attained distinction at home and abroad, and were ambitious of rising higher. Hortensius had already passed the prime of life, and was enjoying his renown as a pleader at the bar, where he was judged to excel all his contemporaries.

Such were the chiefs whose rank, age, and services might entitle them to take the lead in affairs on the retirement of Sulla. There was room, however, for younger and better men to make their way into the arena and contend with them for the ascendancy. Cnæus Pompeius was just thirty years of age, but his rise to public station had been unprecedentedly early. His father, Strabo, had been a soldier of fortune; and the son, cradled in the camp, had resolved from the first to secure the attachment of the soldiers. He carried over the army to Sulla at a critical moment, but still he kept himself at its head, and confirmed it in its devotion to his own fortune. At the dictator's bidding he led it against the Marian partisans in the Cisalpine, in Africa, and in Spain. Victorious over the enemies of the Senate, he was not less cruel than Sulla to the vanquished. He put to death a Carbo in Sicily, and a Domitius in Africa. Though a soldier by breeding and profession, he, too, like Sulla, studied literature and exercised himself in the art of public speaking. It was remarked of him that he was neither covetous nor licentious, and as judged by the Roman standard his moral character was above his time. He is represented, indeed, with some inconsistency, sometimes as benign and affable, again as haughty and morose. He was undoubtedly a great dissembler, and not less certainly he lacked the warmth and generosity which make and retain friends. Sulla, however, became jealous of his popularity. After his victory over the Numidian Hiarbas, he required him to disband his troops. Pompeius replied by leading it in person to Rome, when the whole city went out to meet him, and Sulla himself was compelled to head the procession, and hail the youthful conqueror with the title of 'Magnus.' When he demanded a triumph, being not yet a senator, the dictator hesitated; but Pompeius threatened, the people shouted in approval, and his demand was conceded. The nobles for the most part shared the misgivings of their leader.

Pompeius had not hitherto exercised any civic functions. He was not of age to sue legally for the consulship; and disdaining to grasp at it, he used his own influence to obtain it for another. It was by his assistance that Lepidus received the appointment, as

an avowed opponent of Sulla's policy. As soon as Sulla died the new consul tried to prevent him from receiving the honour of a public funeral, and already spoke of repealing his laws. But Pompeius affected to hold the balance, and now stepped in to support Catulus, the other consul, against his colleague. The agitation of parties increased. Lepidus proclaimed the restoration of the powers of the tribuneship. The Senate was astounded at this audacity, but refrained from reprisals, and contented itself with binding the two consuls with an oath to use no violence against each other. Their year of office was now expiring. It might be hoped that Lepidus, removed to the government of the Narbonensis, would be too distant to disturb the peace of the city. But the rebel consul, repairing to his province, there allied himself openly with the exiled Marians, and raised the standard of their faction. The Senate armed in defence of the government, and despatched Catulus to confront the enemy, with the countenance and co-operation of Pompeius. Lepidus, backed by M. Junius Brutus governor of the Cisalpine, had led his forces to the Milvian bridge, a few miles only from the city; but he was defeated in three successive engagements, and driven into Sardinia, where he died soon afterwards of fever. Brutus and the rest of his followers were taken or dispersed. The revolt was speedily put down, and for once the government refrained from sanguinary reprisals. The character of Lepidus was vain and petulant. His enterprise was feeble and ill-concerted, and seems to have been precipitated by the firmness of the Senate in resisting his demands. The wariest of the Marians refrained from entangling themselves in his schemes, and their cause lost nothing by his death. The remnant of his troops was carried over to Spain by Perperna, and these swelled the forces of a better leader, Sertorius.

Sertorius was by birth a Sabine, who had served with distinction in the campaigns against the Cimbri, and also in Spain, where he had won the hearts of the provincials. In the civil wars he had attached himself to Marius, and enjoyed some share in his government. His moderation had been conspicuous; he was untainted with the guilt of the proscriptions. Under the ascendancy of Sulla he had withdrawn into Spain, and there hoped to fortify a retreat for the shattered remnant of his party. The provincials hailed him as a deliverer from the proconsular rule, which they identified with the government of the Senate. The dictator sent an army against him, and he was obliged to flee the country and take refuge in Mauretania. History

has thrown a romantic colouring over the deeds of this brave adventurer, who is said to have proposed to sail for the far-famed islands of the West, and establish his sovereignty in the paradise of Grecian legend. We know, however, that by his intrigues with the Africans he got himself friends and resources, and defeated a Roman army under one of Sulla's lieutenants. From Africa he crossed at the call of the Lusitanians into Spain, and placed himself at the head of a widespread revolt. Metellus commanded for the Senate, but he had not the vigour nor the ability to cope with Sertorius, who broke several armies of the republic, and for the moment established an independent sovereignty in the peninsula. He educated the Spanish youth in Roman arts and manners and the principles of civil government. Perperna arrived to reinforce him with a handful of veteran soldiers; but he had now to encounter the whole force of Rome wielded by its best captain, the young Pompeius. Faithful to the lessons he had imbibed in his father's camp, this aspiring warrior had refused to disband his legions at the bidding of the government; but he willingly offered them for its service, and was authorised to lead them across the Alps and exercise the powers of a proconsul for enlisting recruits and compelling supplies both in Gaul and Spain. Several engagements ensued, and the balance of success was long held doubtful. It was not perhaps till Metellus was induced to retire from the scene that full play was given to the abilities of his abler coadjutor. Meanwhile Sertorius had been false to himself and his own cause. He is represented at least as having assumed the airs of a Roman tyrant rather than of the patriot champion of the country which had adopted him. It was in vain that he played upon the imagination of his rude and superstitious followers, and pretended that a milk-white hind he had taught to caress him was a gift of his familiar patroness, the goddess Diana. Threatened at last with their desertion, he is said to have caused the massacre of the children of their chiefs, whom he had kept at Osca as hostages under the pretence of educating them. This reckless crime broke his party in pieces. His lieutenant, Perperna, intrigued against him, and found means to get him assassinated. The traitor assumed his place at the head of the troops that still rallied round the Marian banner, but the victory of the Senate was now assured. Pompeius had resumed the field with fresh forces. Perperna was overthrown and taken in the first engagement, and sought to ransom his life by disclosing his adherents in the city. Pompeius, from generosity or policy, refused to inspect the list. The captive

was put to death and the revolt speedily quelled. Pompeius filled the province with steady supporters of the Senate, and confirmed the allegiance of the transalpine Gauls, and both in Spain and Gaul founded a strong party of personal adherents.

A.U. 683.
B.C. 71.

The struggle of Sertorius in Spain occupied the Roman legions for a period of eight years. In the meanwhile the popular party at home were recovering their hopes and their confidence. The enterprise of Lepidus at least inspired them with the feeling that they were still a power in the state. In the year 76 Licinius, a tribune, was declaiming on the humiliation of the tribunate, and urging the people to stand up for the prerogatives of their appointed champions. A succession of bad harvests had raised the price of corn; the numbers and activity of the pirates of the Mediterranean cut off the supply from beyond sea; the hungry populace were prompt to clamour at the heels of any political agitator. Aurelius Cotta, consul in 75, was compelled to make terms. He passed a law to enable the tribunes to succeed, as of old, to other offices, and to convene the assemblies. The tribune Oppius ventured in this year to exercise his veto, and the Senate dared not resent his interference on the spot.

U.C. 678.
B.C. 76.

At the same time the notorious ill-conduct of the rulers in the provinces armed the people with an irresistible cry against them. Even the most honourable men of their own party, such as Catulus, openly denounced their shameless profligacy. The people called for the restoration of the full powers of the tribunals to check the license of the judges and the impunity of crime. The consul Lucullus was fighting a losing battle against the leaders of the popular movement. The war with Sertorius was still in progress, and Pompeius was calling on the government for ampler resources to conduct it. The pirates were making descents upon the coast of Italy itself, sacking towns and rifling temples, and Mithridates was menacing the eastern provinces with a second irruption not less terrible than the first. Under these circumstances not money only but men were required to defend the state. The consuls threw open the granaries. But Licinius harangued the people and told them how the tribunes of old in similar emergencies had forbidden them to enlist in the legions, and had always compelled the Senate to yield. The nobles temporised, promising to come to terms as soon as Pompeius should return to Rome, and Pompeius promised to satisfy their claims. The tribunes withdrew their demands, the people inscribed their names on the lists, but the treachery of Perperna had already relieved Pompeius

from his difficulties, and he could afford to postpone the settlement.

Among the perils of this eventful period which had emboldened the tribunes was a sudden outbreak of gladiators in Campania, which spread to a formidable insurrection. The shows of the arena had already begun to form the great national diversion of the Romans. Slaves, captives and criminals were the ordinary victims of this barbarous amusement though freemen and even citizens sometimes fought in the theatres for hire. A large troop or *family* of these swordsmen was maintained at Capua by one Batiatus, to be let out to the prætors or ædiles on occasions of public entertainment. These men at least were not voluntary combatants. They plotted to escape, and seventy-eight of their number succeeded in breaking loose. The fugitives first seized some spits and other implements in

U.C. 681. a cook-shop; thus equipped they made themselves masters

B.C. 73. of a store of gladiatorial weapons. After taking refuge in the

crater of Vesuvius, then extinct, they issued forth and stormed a neighbouring stronghold. They chose for their leader a Thracian named Spartacus, a man of great strength and courage, and endowed with a natural genius for command. Attacked by a detachment sent against them from Capua, they exchanged their own imperfect implements for the arms and armour left upon the field. Their numbers rapidly increased. They next overcame a force of 3,000 men under C. Clodius. The shepherds of Apulia left their employment to join these predatory warriors; even the veterans of Sulla were restless and excited, and some perhaps were tempted to quit their farms for the plunder of the cities. In the course of three years, during which Spartacus made head against the power of the republic, his numbers were successively estimated at forty, seventy, and a hundred thousand men. He occupied for a time the southern districts of Italy, and sacked many of the cities in Campania. But he failed to get support from the Italian communities; even the Samnites and the Marians shrank from a revolt of slaves and brigands. Spartacus was made sensible of his real weakness. He urged his straggling followers to burst the barrier of the Alps, and betake themselves to their own homes in Gaul and Thrace and elsewhere. But the plunder of all Italy seemed within their reach, and they despised his warnings. The Senate, seriously alarmed, sent both the consuls with ample forces to conduct a regular war against the public enemy. They were both ignominiously defeated. Their armies were next entrusted to M. Crassus, in the absence of Pompeius the

ablest of the Sullan veterans. Meanwhile dissensions arose in the horde itself; parties separated from the main body, and were cut off in detail. The legions of the republic, numerous and well-appointed, closed in upon the disorganised remnant. Retracing his steps from the north of Italy, Spartacus now sought to transport his men into Sicily, and there revive the servile war of half a century before. A fleet of Cilician privateers lay off Rhegium, and with these he treated for a passage. But they treacherously deceived him, and sailed away with the money he had proffered. Crassus was following close upon him; he broke through the enemy's lines, but with only a portion of his diminished band. Flying northwards, he met with no army to oppose him, and for a moment it seemed as if Rome herself might fall into his hands. Crassus urged the Senate by letters to recall Lucullus from Asia and Pompeius from Spain; again repenting of having invited his rivals to share, perhaps to rob him of his glory, he redoubled his efforts to bring the war to an end before their arrival. He succeeded in bringing Spartacus to bay and defeating and slaying him; but Pompeius after all came in time to exterminate the few remaining fugitives, and to receive from his partial countrymen the honours of victory.

Pompeius had inscribed upon his trophy in the Pyrenees that he had taken 876 cities between the Alps and the Straits of Hercules. In this announcement there was more than meets the eye. It indicated not only that he had burst the gates of so many hostile fortresses, slain their defenders and spoiled their inhabitants; he had reorganised the political and fiscal government of every community, had transferred to his own partisans the estates of the disaffected, endowed his faithful allies, such as Massilia, with the lands of whole tribes; planted many military colonies, as at Narbo, Convenæ, and Pompelon, and scattered a host of his own clients and dependents through the length and breadth of the land. His aim had been to amass the entire resources of both Gauls and Spaniards in the hands of officials of his own creation, and transform one-half of the Roman dominions into a province of his own. This effort to form as it were an empire within the empire was something new in the annals of Roman ambition, but the same policy was carried out with even more effect by his own great rival at no distant period. When at last Pompeius re-entered Rome as the greatest of her children, the only question was whether he would ask for her honours as a citizen, or seize them as an invader. But he remembered the ardour with which his countrymen had hailed his return from his earlier victories. He

disdained to question the permanence of this popularity, and preferred being lifted into the seat of power on the shoulders of the people to scaling it at the head of his legionaries. Born and bred in camps, he had served no subordinate civil magistracy; he yet wanted some years to the legitimate age for the consulship, but the Romans had often waived such nice objections, and when the conqueror of the West sued for their suffrages they elected him with enthusiasm. With some reluctance they gave him Crassus for his colleague. Crassus was not a favourite with the people; and how-
A.U. 683. ever good the service he had done against Spartacus, how-
B.C. 71. ever large the means he lavished at his election when he feasted the populace at 10,000 tables, he would not have obtained their votes at all but for the support of Pompeius himself.

M. Licinius Crassus was among the foremost men of his time. His birth was noble, but his patrimony had been seized by the Marians, and when he commenced his career as a Sullan partisan he had his fortune to make. His branch of the Crassi had received the appellation of Dives from the wealth accumulated by an early ancestor, and it was to the amassing of wealth that M. Crassus most studiously devoted himself. He was eminent as a speculator and an usurer. His talents as a speaker he lent mainly to the services of wealthy clients. He educated slaves to make a profit of their sale or hire, and watched, it is said, the fires in the city, to buy up precarious property at the cheapest rates. By the discreet use of his increasing means he gained himself a numerous following of mortgagees and debtors. Around him, as a safe and shrewd politician, rallied the moneyed interests of the city, the class who were silently founding fortunes on the spoils of the provinces, while the great chiefs were squandering their estates in the race of preferment. The cause of the knights found a stedfast patron in M. Crassus; and though his name was not so brilliant as that of Pompeius, he might still hope to trim the balance of conflicting parties.

A third aspirant to power, young and yet unknown to fame, now enters upon the scene. Caius Julius Cæsar, the greatest name in history, was descended from a patrician family of the highest antiquity, which pretended to derive its origin from the goddess Venus, through Iulus, the son of Æneas, the son of Anchises. Up to this time the Julii had sided generally with the faction of the nobles, to which they naturally belonged; but Marius himself had married a Julia, and the young Caius, his nephew, readily took part with so distinguished a relative. He confirmed this connexion by espousing

a daughter of Cinna, and deemed himself the rightful heir to the leadership of the popular cause. The seven consulships of the one, and the four of the other, foreshadowed in his eyes the future monarchy of Rome. Many causes, he perceived, were co-operating to obliterate the instincts of freedom and independence, and moulding the Roman people to subjection to a single ruler. To this revolution he lent his whole strength. He saw, indeed, as did many others of his class how hollow were the fictions on which the forms of the republic were founded, but none of them so frankly unmasked and rejected them. He thus laid himself open to the attacks of the prejudiced and selfish, and undoubtedly his conduct was in many respects light and unscrupulous. But though early suspected, feared, and denounced, Cæsar was beloved, more than any public man at Rome, by all who came under the fascination of his genial and generous nature.

As yet, indeed, his future eminence was rightly estimated by few or none. Cicero could not fail to mark the brilliancy of his talents, as well as the beauty of his form and features; but when he saw him studiously disposing his curling locks and his trailing robe he declared that so frivolous a creature could never endanger the institutions of his country. Cæsar, indeed, was at that time chiefly known as a leader of fashion among the careless and dissolute youth of his class. The exploits of his early career might raise a smile at the buoyant confidence they betokened, but betrayed no depth of design or fixity of resolution, from which to augur the purpose of a life. He had defied the dictator, and adroitly concealed himself from his pursuit. He had served at the siege of Mitylene, and merited a civic crown by saving the lives of his fellow-soldiers. When captured by the pirates, and required to produce a ransom of twenty talents, he had scornfully promised fifty, but at the same time pledged himself to bring his captors to punishment. While detained in their custody he had amused himself by reciting to them his plays and verses; nevertheless he did not afterwards fail to keep his word with them, for he pursued them with his squadron, captured and delivered them to his imperator. When at a later period he followed the prætor Antistius as quæstor into Spain he wept, it is said, at the sight of a statue of Alexander, who had already conquered a world at the age at which his own public career was only just commencing.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Consulship of Pompeius and Crassus, B.C. 70—Their encouragement of the popular party—Cæsar impeaches certain provincial governors—Cicero pleads against Verres, who retires into exile—Censors appointed to purge the Senate—Vanity of Pompeius—The Gabinian law appointing him to the command against the Cilician pirates—His success in this enterprise—Is supported by Cæsar, who studies to detach him from the Senate—Lucullus conducts a war against Mithridates and Tigranes—His victory at Tigranocerta—He is recalled to Rome by the intrigues of Pompeius—The Manilian law confers supreme command in the East on Pompeius—Successes of Pompeius—The Euphrates declared to be the boundary of the empire—Pompeius expels the Seleucidæ from Palestine—Death of Mithridates—Settlement of the East.—(B.C. 70–63.)

THE few years which had elapsed since the death of Sulla had witnessed a great change in the attitude of parties. Up to that period every statesman's birth and connexions afforded, for the most part, a guarantee for his political views. This natural inheritance was represented in the strongest manner by Marius and Sulla; exceptions had occurred to it before, and especially in the case of the Gracchi; but from this time it almost ceased to exist. While a senatorial and a popular party continued both in name and fact to be arrayed against one another, they were no longer sharply distinguished by the position and origin of their respective members. The interests of party were no longer identified with those of class. The game of politics becomes now a contest of individual leaders, rather than of ranks and orders. Public interests serve only as a cover for personal ambitions. The men who from this time forward sought to raise themselves to supreme power issued one and all from the ranks of the nobility; nevertheless, none of them maintained the cause of the Senate except for some momentary advantage. They all professed at least to devote themselves to the interests of the people; while their real object was self-aggrandisement, to which the favour of the great masses of the people and the provincials seemed more and more essential.

Pompeius and Crassus had entered on their consulship in the year B.C. 70. The nobles had yielded without a struggle to the name and influence of the Great Captain; but they feared
 U.C. 684. the popular reforms they believed him to meditate, and
 B.C. 70. would willingly have refused him a colleague too well disposed to second them. The consuls soon justified these apprehensions.

Their first object was to secure a hold of popular favour through the popular magistrates, the tribunes, and the tribunes were to be gained by the recovery of their ancient prerogatives. The measures which Sulla had taken against them had been already shaken. Catulus and Lucullus, the leaders of the senatorial party, could do little to resist the power of the consuls impelled by the whole weight of the assembly, and supported by the vigorous agitation of the youthful Cæsar. When the people had secured this advantage the provincials found willing ears to listen to their indignant complaints of the tyranny of their governors. The popular leaders resolved to bring the character of the judges to the test.

Cæsar was the first to throw himself forward and impeach the chiefs of the Senate for malversation abroad. He exposed the iniquities of Dolabella in Cilicia, of Antonius in Achaia, but in both cases the culprits were scandalously acquitted. Pompeius himself encouraged the rising orator M. Tullius Cicero to denounce the crimes of Verres, to which we must for a moment return. This man was powerfully supported. His defence was undertaken by Hortensius, the ablest advocate of his party, the favourite of the judges, the acknowledged 'king of the law-courts.' But it was further hoped to secure a favourable prætor who would have to select the judges for the trial, and with this view it was sought to postpone the process till the year following. The prosecutor was young and inexperienced; he was personally little known, being a new man, a municipal of Arpinum, of knightly family, but of no further distinction. He had pleaded, indeed, with marked ability on some former occasions, and had displayed much spirit in resisting the tyrannical application of one of Sulla's laws, even in the dictator's lifetime. As quæstor in Sicily, a few years before the government of Verres, he had gained credit for purity as well as for official activity. The Sicilians themselves had now enlisted his services in their behalf, and he came forward for the first time as an accuser, having hitherto confined himself to the less invidious branch of his profession, the defence of the accused. Cicero was resolute in resisting the call for delay. He demanded time, however, to collect evidence, which the defendant blindly conceded to him; but he produced his proofs in half the time allotted him. When the prosecutor opened his case he was already sure of the approval of the consuls; Hortensius himself advised submission, and Verres declined to plead and retired into voluntary exile. Cicero had, in fact, no opportunity of deliver-

ing the orations he had prepared, but he published them as a standing impeachment of the system against which they were directed, and the effect the publication produced is a guarantee of their substantial truth. The consuls were emboldened to restore to the knights their share in the judicia, and thus broke down the great bulwark of aristocratic privilege. Pompeius proceeded to strike another blow. Sulla had refused to allow the appointment of censors with the function of reviewing the list of the Senate. But the consul would not suffer this office to remain longer in abeyance. Sixty-four of the senators were now removed from the order, as inadequate in their fortune or unworthy from their character; and the whole body was made to feel that it was the instrument of the commonwealth, and not its master. All the blood of Sulla's proscriptions had secured for his political work only eight years of existence.

Pompeius, consul though he was, belonged only to the equestrian order, and he professed to be proud of being numbered therein. His biographer describes the famous scene which he enacted when, being called on by the censors to say whether he had performed all the military services required of him by law, he replied with a loud voice, 'I have performed all, and all under my own imperium.' The people broke out into loud shouts, and the youthful hero felt that he was popularly recognised as their champion. He gave himself up to the full intoxication of vanity. He required his colleague Crassus to treat him with obsequious respect. To the multitude he assumed an air of haughty reserve. He withdrew from the business of an advocate, which the greatest men of the republic had never disdained; he gradually estranged himself from the forum, and never went into public except with a crowd of courtiers around him. This affectation of royal manners was not assumed without a purpose, but he could not bend to the compliance of a demagogue; and the people, with all their admiration for him, made no further advances. He felt at last, after two years' dallying with their favour, that he risked losing it altogether, unless he could rouse their enthusiasm by newer exploits. An occasion soon offered worthy of his military genius.

The Mediterranean, the great highway of ancient commerce, was infested by swarms of pirates. Sertorius intrigued with them on the coasts of Spain, Spartacus bargained with them at the Straits of Messana. These were not transactions between a hunted fugitive and a crew of buccaneers; they were rather treaties of service and alliance between military and naval powers. The conquest of

Greece had driven thousands of expert mariners from the continent to the islands, from the islands to their ships; these adventurers were fearfully multiplied by every Roman victory in Asia. The coast of Cilicia, indeed, placed midway between the emporiums of Greek and Oriental traffic, had long swarmed with predatory flotillas. When Sulla required Mithridates to dismantle his armaments the sailors carried off their vessels to the fortified harbours of these pirates. Thence they made descents upon various coasts, stormed cities, and sold their captured citizens in the slave marts. Their ships were computed at a thousand, the towns they had plundered at four hundred; they rifled the treasures and temples of the most venerated of the Grecian deities. Their streamers were gilded, their oars inlaid with silver, their sails were dyed with the Tyrian purple. They sat down on the shore to sumptuous banquets; the coast resounded with the melody of their flutes and tabors. Such were the romantic stories current about them in the East and the West. Towards Rome they manifested more especially their pride and petulance, and took a pleasure in insulting the citizens they captured before consigning them to death.

Even on the coast of Italy several cities were attacked by these marauders. Misenum, Caieta, even Ostia at the mouth of the Tiber, were all laid under contribution. Two prætors were carried off from the mainland, with their lictors and ensigns; travellers were stopped and plundered even on the Appian Way. But they wanted a common centre and chief; they had no confidence in one another, and they could not act in concert. Still it might have been long before they would have fallen to pieces of themselves; nor could the Romans be easily roused to make an effort against them by the sufferings of their allies, or even by the indignities practised on themselves. But when at last the pirates began to cut off the foreign supplies of the city, and it became apparent that Rome herself might be starved into ransom, the danger could no longer be overlooked. The proconsul Servilius had been sent in A.U. 676.
 B.C. 78 to root out their strongholds in Asia Minor. After B.C. 78.
 three laborious campaigns among the mountains of Cilicia he returned with a triumph and the surname Isauricus. He had taken some cities, destroyed many vessels, captured several chiefs, and given to Cilicia itself the name of a province. These specious successes were of no avail. The pirates were as formidable as ever. Metellus drove them again to sea, and reduced their allies, the mountaineers of Crete. He was duly repaid with the title of

Creticus. But chased from one point, they quickly reappeared at another, and at sea at least could generally evade the pursuit of the Roman armaments.

Meanwhile the corn-ships of Sicily and Africa ceased to arrive; the largesses of grain to the people were abruptly stopped. Threatened with the worst of evils, Rome ran blindly upon the most desperate
A.U. 687. of remedies. In the year 67 the tribune Gabinius proposed
B.C. 67. that some man of consular rank—pointing of course to Pompeius—should be invested for a period of three years with absolute authority over all the waters of the Mediterranean, together with its coasts for fifty miles inland. The whole Roman empire was, in fact, little more than such a fringe of territory, enclosing the great midland ocean. In vain did the affrighted senators resist and instigate a riot in the city, or oppose the veto of one tribune against the measures of another. The motion was carried; Pompeius was named with acclamations, and a force of 120,000 infantry, 5,000 cavalry, and 500 galleys placed under his orders.

As the price of provisions fell at once on the passing of the bill, the people exclaimed that the very name of their new champion had put an end to the crisis. The event fell, indeed, little short of this boast. Pompeius chose twenty-four senators for his lieutenants, and divided the Mediterranean into thirteen portions, appointing a squadron and commander for each. With his force thus distributed in every quarter he enclosed the enemy as with a net, and brought them unresisting to land. Such of them as escaped his toils, or broke through the meshes, fled with all speed to their usual rendezvous in Cilicia, as bees, says Plutarch, to their hive. Pompeius chased them with a select squadron, but in the meantime he had completely cleared the Western waters, and that within the space of forty days. The fugitives rallied on their own coasts and encountered him in a naval engagement. Routed at sea, they took refuge within the walls of Coracesium, but the moderation of their conqueror encouraged them to capitulate, and Pompeius was satisfied with dispersing them in small parties among the neighbouring cities. To Soli, one of the colonies thus established, he gave the name of Pompeiopolis, another was planted at Dymæ, in Achaia, a third even in Calabria. This policy proved judicious, and for a time at least the plague of piracy was stayed, though we shall find it rife again at a later period. The 'piratic laurel' was fairly won, and the victor deserves the credit of one of the most successful operations in Roman warfare.

As the favourite of the people, and claiming to be their patron, Pompeius obtained support from Cæsar, whose services he accepted with dignified condescension. But Cæsar, under the great man's shadow, was advancing his own schemes. He desired to detach Pompeius from the Senate, and frustrate the project which he and Cicero seemed to contemplate, of uniting the rival orders under a virtual dictatorship. It might be that such a project was altogether visionary. The chief of the Romans, for many years to come, could only be the champion of one faction for the coercion of the rest, and meanwhile any attempt to fuse irreconcilable interests would be resented as the sacrifice of one to another. On his return from his quæstorship in Spain Cæsar connected himself more closely with Pompeius by marriage with one of his kinswomen. As he drew nearer to the idol of the people he learnt to estimate more truly the weakness of his character. Pompeius loved the forms of the constitution only because they could be so easily relaxed for his convenience. Supreme power he would not seize, only because he expected at every crisis that it would be thrust upon him. He loved extraordinary commissions, such as that against the pirates, as betokening his virtual sovereignty; but Cæsar too was well inclined to support them, as precedents in the direction of actual monarchy. Cæsar had a further object in pushing these honours upon Pompeius. He desired his absence from the city, to make room for his own intrigues with the people. Three months had sufficed for the suppression of the pirates. Another pretext was not wanting for conferring upon the successful imperator a second command not less extensive, and more permanent. Sulla's peace with Mithridates had been a makeshift for the occasion. The causes of disturbance remained the same: the ambition of the king himself, the disaffection of the provincials, and the tyranny of their governors. Mithridates was again in arms; the East was once more in flames, and the generals of the republic were receding a third time before the advancing conflagration.

Lucullus was consul with Aurelius Cotta, in the year 74, when the apprehension first arose of a renewal of the war. Consuls and consulars intrigued for the command. The provinces for U.C. 680. the ensuing year had been already assigned, and Gaul had B.C. 74. fallen to Lucullus. But Lucullus was anxious to exchange this command for an Eastern government, anxious to secure the distinction for himself, nor less anxious to snatch it from Pompeius, who, though still engaged in his contest with Sertorius might, he feared, impe-

riously demand it. This arrangement, however, required a vote of the people, and could only be obtained by ignoble condescensions. Lucullus was at last appointed to Cilicia, which bordered upon Cappadocia and Pontus; while Cotta, who had sued for the same command, was put off with the secondary charge of defending the Hellespont with a naval armament.

Lucullus crossed into Asia with a single legion to receive the obedience of the numerous forces still posted beyond the *Ægean*. Since the murder of Fimbria the troops of the republic had become fearfully demoralised; all discipline was lost, and soldiers and officers vied with one another in harassing the natives. Lucullus set to work to chastise these excesses, and corrected at the same time the abuses of the civil government. But Mithridates was already in the field, at the head of 150,000 men trained to the use of Roman weapons, and relieved from the fatal encumbrances of Oriental warfare—its embroidered tents, its sumptuous furniture, and its trains of eunuchs and concubines. He had invaded Bithynia, where he was again welcomed as an avenger by the suffering cities. For four years the contest was waged, and the success of Lucullus was at last signal. But Mithridates, expelled from Pontus, took refuge in Armenia; the king, Tigranes, refused to deliver him up, and began to utter menaces against the republic. The kingdom of Armenia had reached under this haughty chief its highest pitch of greatness. Embracing originally the mountains in which the Euphrates and the Tigris take their rise, it now stretched from the Euxine to the Caspian, and formed a barrier against the incursions of the Scythian hordes into southern Asia. On the east it was pressed by the formidable power of the Parthians, but its ruler had encroached westward upon Cappadocia and Cilicia, and had wrested a great part of Syria from the last descendant of the Seleucidæ who still reigned in Antioch. The Armenians had never yet been led against the Roman legions, and Tigranes was confident of the invincible strength of his mailed cavalry. Perhaps he relied no less on the difficult character of his mountainous country. But the great battle of Tigranocerta dispelled his calculations. The Romans were few in number, but their prowess was irresistible. The mailed horsemen were cut to pieces, helpless either for fighting or for fleeing. Lucullus pushed on, and would have taken Artaxata, the capital, but the murmurs of his own soldiers compelled him to desist. He turned to the right on his homeward route and captured Nisibis, on the Tigris. But the complaints of the legionaries, who were wearied with such long

and distant service, and of the officials whose rapacity he had controlled, had made themselves heard at Rome. The demagogues of the city, envious and spiteful, charged the proconsul with protracting a glorious war from love of power and avarice. They enumerated the provinces subject to his imperium: Cilicia, Asia, Bithynia, Paphlagonia, Galatia, with the kingdoms of Pontus and Armenia; and taunted him with the plunder of palaces, as if he had been sent to rifle kings and not to conquer them. Such were the frivolous pretences on which the people were induced to press for their hero's recall. He was required to release a portion of his troops from service at the moment that he was about to lead his whole force against Mithridates. His successes were at once arrested and reversed, and the provinces suffered from fresh incursions.

This vacillation in the policy of the government had been brought about by the tribunes in the interest of Pompeius. The reappearance of Mithridates in arms served their purpose of declaring that the state was in danger, that Lucullus had failed, that none but the Great Captain was equal to the crisis. The power of the king of Pontus had in fact been thoroughly broken, and Lucullus, if suffered to act, would have extinguished it without fail. But another game was to be played. Manilius, a tribune, proposed to confer upon Pompeius enormous powers for the destruction of this broken enemy, whose resources Cicero magnified with the same turgid rhetoric with which he blackened his character. The pirates had, indeed, required to be strenuously dealt with; and the bill of Gabinius might be justified by the emergency; but that of Manilius served no state necessity; it was a device for the gratification of unlawful ambition. The people, however, supported it with acclamations; the eloquence of Cicero, who began now to be felt as a power in the state, recommended it to wavering statesmen; Cæsar and Crassus smiled favourably upon it; the earnest dissuasions of Catulus and Hortensius were overborne by the general enthusiasm. Even among the nobles there were some who were pleased to be rid at any price of the presence of the man they feared and suspected. A.U. 688.
Pompeius was still abroad when the appointment was B.C. 66. notified to him, and the pretence he made of aversion to it disgusted even his admirers. It was well known that he had envied the fortune of Lucullus, who had commanded now for seven successive years, and penetrated into regions never before visited by the Roman arms. He had feared to be eclipsed by this rival's triumphs, and was eager to eclipse them in his turn. The two generals, who

met in the centre of Asia Minor, scarcely dissembled their mutual jealousy. The one disregarded every disposition made by his predecessor, and studiously disparaged his exploits; the other could retort by affirming that the triumphs of Pompeius had been won over foes already broken. Lepidus, Spartacus, and even Sertorius, he might say, had been already worsted by Catulus, Crassus, and Metellus. He had now only the shadow of the great Mithridates to contend with, and he had arrived just in time to snatch the laurels from the hand of Lucullus. It was related that when the two emperors met with their wreathed fasces, those of Lucullus, who had come from a green and shady region, were fresh and verdant, while his rival, who had traversed a sandy desert, had only withered branches to exhibit. The lictors of the one offered some of their fresh leaves to the others; and this was taken as a sign that Pompeius was about to gather the reward of his predecessor's victories.

On his return to Rome the nobles would have compensated Lucullus for the ill-treatment he had suffered. But the people regarded him with all the more jealousy, and their tribunes continued to withhold from him for three years the triumph he had so justly merited. For his own part he seems to have paid little heed to the conduct of either party. He had not, indeed, ruled the East so many years without amassing enormous wealth and imbibing expensive tastes, and these he was now content to enjoy in private retirement. His villas and gardens were the most magnificent in Rome; his collections of pictures and statues formed an era in the culture of his countrymen; he opened his libraries to public use, though the students who frequented them were more commonly Greeks than Romans. He lavished immense sums in the breeding of fish, the fashionable folly of the day, and let the sea into his ponds at Bauli by a channel cut through a lofty hill. Pompeius, who never forgot that his rival had traversed Asia at the head of an army, called him, not without bitterness, *Xerxes togatus*, a retired Xerxes. But Lucullus was a practical philosopher, and if he renounced the cares of public life for voluptuous indolence, he could also forgive his enemies, and smile at the triumphs they had gained at his expense. Some pleasing anecdotes are related of his intercourse with Pompeius at a later period.

The assertion that Mithridates had actually ceased to be formidable at the moment when the tribes insisted on sending Pompeius against him, seems to be justified by the promptness with which he now sued for peace. But the emperor would accord him no terms,

and required his unconditional submission. With savage resolution he girded himself once more for war. Pompeius smiled with the assurance of an easy triumph. His army, united to the legions of Lucullus, was twice as numerous as the broken forces of his adversary. A battle on the border of the Lycus, in the lesser Armenia, gave a complete victory to the Romans. Mithridates fled to Tigranes; but this ally now set a price upon his head, and he was obliged to make his escape through the defiles of the Caucasus, and shut himself up in a fortress of Colchis. There, secure himself, he intrigued against his treacherous accomplice, and the throne of Tigranes was soon shaken by a domestic revolt. The tyrant had put two of his sons to death, a third fled to the Parthian coast, and engaged the king, Phraates, to lead him back in triumph into Armenia. Driven out a second time, he threw himself on the assistance of the Romans, who were already advancing upon Artaxata, when Tigranes surrendered without a blow. Pompeius divided his kingdom between him and his son, but soon found a pretext for ejecting the younger candidate, who now sought aid from Phraates. The Romans and the Parthians watched each other from either side of the Euphrates, but as yet neither ventured to commence the attack.

Pompeius was now free to pursue his first enemy. He wintered on the Lycus, and after repelling an attack of the Albanians penetrated in the spring of B.C. 65 as far as the Phasis. He had penetrated beyond the furthest limits of Roman warfare, but his onward advance was checked by diversions in his flank and rear. After passing a winter at Amisus, in Pontus, and indulging his soldiers with all the license from which Lucullus had so studiously withhold them, he allowed himself to forget the fugitive Mithridates, while he nourished other schemes of more magnificent conquest. The Euxine and the Caspian he had found barren both of fame and booty; but the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf might reward him with the wealth of Cyrus and the renown of Alexander.

In the spring of B.C. 64 Pompeius crossed the Taurus, and directed his march upon Syria. The wretched inhabitants, whom their feeble ruler had left a prey to the wandering Arabs, might rejoice to hear the proconsul proclaim that the dynasty of Seleucus had ceased to reign. Syria and Phœnicia were at once reduced to a Roman province, while Antiochus was relegated to a petty throne in the district of Commagene. Osroene and Chalcidice were delivered to dependent princes, and the Euphrates was declared to be

the boundary of the empire. The realm of Palestine, southward, was a prey to family quarrels. It had been freed from the yoke of the Seleucides by the bravery of its heroes the Maccabees, and to their descendants the Jewish people had continued to pay willing homage. But now two brothers, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, contested the priesthood, in which the temporal sovereignty also resided. The younger had expelled the elder and proclaimed himself king. The priests and nobles sided with the deprived Hyrcanus, but the usurper Aristobulus was the favourite of the nation. Hyrcanus appealed to Pompeius. After pretending to weigh the claims of both rivals he consented to undertake his restoration. The Jews defended their freedom and their choice with little regard to their means of maintaining them. They were speedily driven from the field into the strong city of Jerusalem and the temple which formed its citadel. After holding out for three months, the impregnable fortress was scaled on a day of religious ceremonial, when the defenders had neglected to man the walls. Pompeius, in defiance of the remonstrances of the priests, penetrated into the Holy of Holies; but he abstained from rifling its treasures, and contented himself with reconstituting the government in dependence upon the republic. He might now have carried his victorious arms, in emulation of Alexander, to the verge of the Eastern Ocean; but the sudden death of Mithridates recalled him to dispose of his vacant thrones.

The king of Pontus, driven beyond the Caucasus, but relieved from the immediate pursuit of the Romans, had had leisure to revolve new dreams of aggression. He had conceived the gigantic scheme of attacking Rome from the forests of Scythia. He had connected himself with the wild tribes between the Tanais and the Danube. Beyond these, Thrace, he well knew, was filled with a restless population never yet fully subdued by his enemy. He might hope to lead a vast horde of barbarians to the eastern gorges of the Alps, and pour down into Italy at the point where an invader was least anticipated. The plan, if ever ripe for execution, was defeated by petty jealousies and treacheries. The old king had established himself in the Cimmerian Chersonesus, a secure and commanding position; but he found himself enveloped in revolts and intrigues among his own family and subjects. After the manner of so many Oriental sovereigns, he had consulted his personal safety by putting to death several of his many children; but

U.C. 691.
B.C. 63. he fell at last a victim to Pharnaces, his favourite among them, who had once risen against him, and whom he had spared.

At the last extremity he is said to have taken poison; and the story adds that he had so fortified his system by habitual use of antidotes that the draught had no effect upon him, and he was finally obliged to throw himself upon the sword of a slave. Pharnaces was allowed to retain the kingdom of the Bosphorus. Comana and Paphlagonia were formed into dependent sovereignties. Galatia and Cappadocia were settled, with extended territory, upon two faithful allies of Rome, Deiotarus and Ariobarzanes. Thirty-nine cities were founded by Pompeius, or re-peopled. Seleucia, Antioch, and Phanagoria, in the Chersonese, were declared free communities, under the patronage of the republic. From the Lycus to the Jordan the frontier of the empire was organised under Roman proconsuls or native vassals; but Pontus, Cilicia, Syria, and Phœnicia were definitively inscribed upon the list of provinces. Beyond the Euphrates, Armenia still retained the name of independence; but she had lost all power of self-support, and henceforth only fluctuated in her reliance upon the Romans alternately with the Parthians.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Position of the oligarchical party—Character of M. Porcius Cato—Progress of Cæsar in popular favour—Cicero supports Pompeius and Crassus, and advocates the bill of Manilius—Manœuvres of Cæsar—Process of Rabirius—Intrigues of Catilina—His early career—Crassus and Cæsar suspected of plotting with him—His influence over the young nobility—View of Roman society—Coarseness of the men, and frivolity of the women—Decline of religion and spread of superstition—The Catilinarian conspiracy—The Optimates prepare to encounter it, and employ Cicero to expose and overthrow it—Catilina is rejected for the consulship—His plans revealed to Cicero, consul in 64, and laid before the Senate and people—Cicero authorised to provide for the safety of the state—Catilina allowed to quit the city—His associates seized.

DURING the absence of Pompeius in Asia the extreme section of the oligarchical party, well pleased at the removal of a champion whom they distrusted to so distant an exile, placed themselves under the guidance of their natural chiefs, men of ancient lineage and ancestral honours, such as Catulus, Lucullus, Servilius, Lentulus, and Marcellus. But none of these were men of commanding ability, nor even of adequate energy. Catulus they could not fail to respect, but they regretted his want of firmness. Lucullus seems to have disregarded their solicitations. Many of the principal

nobility were sunk in luxury and indolence, and the eloquence of Hortensius, their best speaker, was speedily eclipsed by that of the upstart Cicero. But there was one man still in their ranks, a plebeian by extraction, untried in civil and military affairs, in whose unflinching zeal and dauntless courage they could securely confide. Judgment, indeed, and tact he sorely needed; but these were qualities which the nobles held in little regard, and neither he nor they were sensible of the deficiency.

This man was M. Porcius Cato, heir to the venerable name of the censor Cato, his great-grandfather, a name long revered by the Romans for the probity and simplicity of its bearer. The younger Cato believed, like his ancestor, in the mission of a superior caste to govern the Roman commonwealth, in the right of a superior race to hold the world in bondage; nor less in the absolute authority of husband over wife, of parent over child, of master over servant. Yet these fearful dogmas were held by a man whose natural temper was quite averse from the violence by which alone they can be maintained, and who strove, on principle rather than from instinct, to repress the natural promptings of humanity by abstract speculation and severe self-discipline. Born in the year B.C. 95, he had witnessed the close of the Social War, and resented as a mere boy the compromise in which it resulted. Nevertheless his feelings had revolted from the atrocities with which Sulla avenged it; and alone of his party he sighed over their victories, and lamented the bloody execution they did upon their enemies. From early years he trained himself after the austere pattern of the ancient times. Inured to frugality, and of simple tastes, he rose above the temptations of his class to rapine and extortion. Enrolling himself in the priesthood of the god Apollo, he seemed to feel a divine call to the practice of bodily self-denial, which constituted the religious life in the view of many of the ancients. He imbibed the doctrines of the Stoic philosophy, the stiffness of which was congenial to his temper, and sought honestly to follow the strictest rules of integrity. Doubtless the exigencies of public affairs drove him, like others much less worthy, to some sordid compromises with his own principles, while in private life the strength he affected became a source of manifold weakness. It made him proud of his own virtues, confident in his judgments, inaccessible to generous impulses, caustic in his remarks on others, a blind observer of forms, and a slave to prejudices. A party composed of such men as Cato would have been ill-matched with the crafty intriguers opposed to them; but when the selfish, indolent,

and unprincipled chose themselves a champion of a character so alien from their own, the hollowness of the alliance and the hopelessness of the cause became sufficiently manifest.

On the other hand, the chiefs of faction most opposed to the Optimates were beginning to consolidate their forces. Pompeius, Crassus, and Cæsar were all working to the same end, the abasement of the old governing party, though they had as yet arrived at no distinct understanding among themselves, and the most important man of the three was himself absent from the city in pursuit of the pirates or of Mithridates. They had secured, moreover, the vigorous assistance of the orator Cicero, who at this time lent himself to the cause which seemed likely to gain the ascendant, and to favour his own views of personal advancement. Cæsar had made himself a marked man, and raised high the hopes of the popular party when, in the year B.C. 68, he had defied the law of Sulla, and exhibited the bust of Marius among the images of his own family. He had made a funeral oration over his aunt Julia, the wife of the same proscribed hero of the people, and had pleaded the cause of Cornelius Cinna and obtained an amnesty for him and other exiles of the Marian party. After his return from the quæstorship in Spain he had gained another step in public honours, and as ædile had delighted the populace with the lavish munificence of his shows. This charge he had been enabled to defray by securing the aid of a wealthy colleague, Bibulus, for his own resources were early exhausted, and his debts amounted to 1,300 talents. At the same time Cicero was supporting the bill of Manilius, and hoping thereby to attach Pompeius to his interests. He also undertook the defence of the tribune C. Cornelius, who, at the instigation no doubt of Cæsar or Crassus, had made some startling attacks upon the prerogatives of the Optimates, and been repaid by a charge of treason for disregarding the veto of a colleague.

U.C. 689.
B.C. 65.

The Optimates were baffled in their process against this petty adversary; but they could retaliate upon Cæsar. On getting the ædileship this ardent enemy had demanded a public mission to reduce Egypt to the form of a province, in virtue of the will of king Ptolemy Alexander. This country, through which all the commerce of the East already passed, was reputed the wealthiest in the world. No Roman officer could touch its soil but much gold would assuredly stick to his hand. Crassus and Cæsar disputed the plunder which should accrue to the fortunate man who should become its proconsul; but the Senate mustered all its forces to baffle both claimants, and was

enabled, perhaps by their division, to succeed. It employed a tribune named Papius to declare that all foreigners, and especially Cæsar's clients, the transpadane Gauls, should be removed from the city, and thus cleared the forum of a violent section of his adherents. The question about Egypt was postponed, and Cæsar was invited to preside at the tribunal which enquired into cases of murder. He set to work to brand the dictatorship of Sulla with a legal stigma. He first cited before him two obscure creatures who had shed blood in the proscription and condemned them. He next induced a tribune to accuse an aged senator, Rabirius, of the slaughter of the notorious traitor Saturninus. In this case Cicero himself defended the culprit, but failed to move the judges. Rabirius appealed to the people, and again Cicero pleaded for him, while the senators made every effort to arouse the compassion of the populace. It was known, indeed, to everyone that Rabirius had not slain Saturninus, and further that the real slayer had been publicly justified and rewarded; besides that the deed, whosoever it was, had occurred thirty-six years before, and might well be condoned by the children of the generation who witnessed it. But the people were immensely excited, and would have defied all justice and mercy for the sake of the triumph they anticipated, had not the prætor, Metellus Celer, suddenly struck the flag which floated on the Janiculum while the tribes were assembled for public business. In ancient times the striking of the flag was the signal that the Etrurians were advancing to attack the city. Straightway all public business was suspended, the comitia was dissolved, the citizens rushed to man the walls. The formality still remained in use among a people singularly retentive of traditional usages; and now the multitude which had just shouted clamorously for innocent blood laughed at the trick by which its

U.C. 691. fury was arrested, and acquiesced in the suspension of
B.C. 63. proceedings. Cæsar had gained his point in the alarm and mortification of the Senate, and allowed the matter to drop, which he never perhaps seriously intended to push to extremity.

But Cæsar gained more than this. The leaders of the people now used their influence to get so hopeful a champion elected head of the college of pontiffs, a prerogative which the people had so lately recovered. As chief pontiff he became the mover of a great political engine, and his person was rendered inviolable. Neither the notorious laxity of his moral conduct, nor his avowed disregard for the religious traditions of the state, hindered Cæsar's advancement to the highest office of the national worship. His duties indeed were

simply ceremonial, however firmly the Romans believed that the welfare of the state depended on their due execution. Cæsar's triumph was the more complete, as it was a victory over Catulus, who had competed with him for the dignity, and offered him a bribe to withdraw. But the Optimates were intent on his destruction, and were threatening him with a charge of treasonable conspiracy. The pontificate was necessary to secure his personal safety. When the hour of election arrived he said to his mother as he left his house, 'This day your son will be either chief pontiff or an exile.'

The crime which it was sought to fasten upon Cæsar was complicity with a seditious conspiracy of the deepest atrocity. For some years past the city had been kept in feverish anxiety by rumours of a plot, not against any particular interest or party, but against the very constitution of the body politic. The nobles had sounded the alarm, and had insinuated that Cæsar, Crassus, and other august citizens, objects of their special dislike and fear, were engaged in contriving the overthrow of the state. This alleged conspiracy is so startling in its character and conduct, so picturesque in the detail of its circumstances, that it has drawn more than a common share of attention from the students of history; and the inducements which the Roman Optimates might have had to invent it, or, if it really existed in embryo, to drive it into open explosion are so obvious, that suspicion has been often thrown upon the charges currently made against its reputed authors. But surely they who would seek to absolve Catilina from the guilt which has been so fatally fixed upon him would cast a stigma hardly less shocking upon Cicero, who tracked and brought him to punishment. This would be treason, as it were, to the honour of human nature; while the testimony of Sallust to the main facts reported is so direct and unhesitating, so little liable to suspicion of personal or party bias, and so strictly contemporary, that to reject it would be to discredit the foundations of history altogether. The story, as in all other complicated incidents, has its difficulties, but these seem to weigh as nothing against the general truth of the recorded narrative. It may be well to review it in connexion with the circumstances of Roman society at this crisis in its history.

The generation of statesmen which had grown up at the feet of the Scipios and the Gracchi, though it had exchanged much of the simple dignity of the old Roman character for a tasteless affectation of Hellenic culture, was still for the most part imbued with high and honourable principles, and devoted to the welfare of the state under the

guarantee of public liberty. But its children had much degenerated from this standard. The vast accession of wealth and power which ensued from the conquest of the East overthrew all moral barriers to the torrent of selfish indulgence. Luxury and dissipation had reduced the noblest houses to beggary; a few crafty usurers had gathered up the plunder of a multitude of spendthrifts. Political and private gambling had converted men of birth and station into needy adventurers, all the more dangerous to the state from their high connexions, and to individuals from their gallant bearing and seductive manners. Among these reckless and accomplished braves none was so conspicuous or so able as L. Sergius Catilina. His descent was among the most ancient in Rome, and he had served with distinction among the nobles ranged under Sulla. His valour, indeed, from the first had been tainted with brutal ferocity. He was accused, as has been said, of assassinating a brother and grasping at his estate. All Rome had seen him waving on a pike the head of the murdered Gratidianus. It was rumoured that, wanting to marry the profligate Orestilla, he had sacrificed his son to secure her favour. Laden with the infamy of such crimes as these, Catilina had nevertheless sued for public honours, had obtained the prætorship, succeeded to the government of Africa, and on his return in B.C. 65 was about to offer himself for the consulship. Publius Clodius, a stripling, not less profligate, but as yet less notorious, crossed his path with a charge of malversation in his province. Presently the rumour ran that Catilina, thus discovered, plotted with Calpurnius Piso, Autronius, and other dissolute and disreputable nobles, to murder the successful candidates and seize the government by force. The names of both Crassus and Cæsar were whispered in connexion with this intrigue. The one, it is said, was to be created dictator, the other his master of the horse. When it was asked on what military resources these adventurers relied, it was answered that Piso, who had got the command of a province in Spain, was to organise an armed force in that quarter to balance the legions of the Senate under Pompeius. The scheme, it was alleged, was opportunely detected; the chief conspirators discovered and marked. Piso shortly afterwards was cut off in his province by banditti, or possibly by assassins; but the proceedings with which the culprits were menaced were stayed by the intervention of a tribune, and the circumstances of the plot, if any such really existed, were never formally revealed.

This affair must, indeed, ever remain dark and dubious. Catilina, it seems, did not shrink from suing for the consulship again in the

year following. Strange indeed it must appear that, notwithstanding some unquestioned and more reputed atrocities, this man could connect himself with many eminent personages and obtain their open support. Cicero himself, a man of undoubted purity, was ready to defend him against Clodius, and to unite with him in joint competition for the consulship. But it was over the corrupt patrician youth that he exercised the most extraordinary ascendancy. He taught them to depend upon his countenance and assistance in every act of wickedness or meanness. Catilina was their friend, their champion, and their idol. They vaunted his strength and vigour, his address in bodily exercises, his iron frame, which could endure alike the toils of war and the excesses of debauch. He became the model of the youthful aspirants to fashionable distinction, which demanded not only splendour in dress and equipages, but eminence in martial accomplishments.

The state of society in which such a man could acquire so much influence may be gathered from a glance at the circumstances in which he moved. When the Roman returned home for a short respite from the wars he beheld few objects around him which could allay the fever of his excited imagination. His pride was fed by trophies and triumphs, by his retinue of captive slaves, by the spoils of conquered palaces. In the intervals of danger and rapine few cared to relax into the vapid enjoyments of art and literature, which had failed to save Greece from subjugation. The writers of Rome were few, and exercised but a transient influence on a small circle of students. Nor were the ordinary habits of civil life such as to soften the brutal manners of the camp. The Romans lived at first in castes, afterwards in parties; even in public places there was little fusion or intercourse of ranks, while at home they domineered over their clients as patrons, over their slaves as masters, over their wives and children as husbands and fathers. The instruction, indeed, of boyhood was general in the upper classes, but it was imparted by slaves, who corrupted the temper of their pupils more than they improved their understanding; and when they married still young from motives of convenience they were found incapable of guiding or elevating their still more neglected consorts. The women were never associated in their husbands' occupations, knew little of their affairs, and were less closely attached to their interests than even their bondsmen. They seldom partook of their amusements, which accordingly degenerated into debauches. Systematically deprived of instruction, the Roman matron was taught,

indeed, to vaunt her ignorance as a virtue. To know Greek and Latin books, to sing and dance, to please in conversation, these, in the opinion of the historian Sallust, were no better than seductive fascinations, and worthy only of courtesans. If a woman broke through this mental bondage she lost in character what she gained in attraction. In either case she was almost equally despised. The laws which gave such facility of divorce show how little the Romans regarded the interests of the married state, while the common practice of adoption among them proves the weakness of their parental sentiment.

Thus did the morose and haughty Roman stand isolated in the centre of his family and of society around him ; nor did he strive to exalt his moral nature by sympathy with the divinity above him. A century, indeed, had scarcely elapsed since Polybius had praised the Romans for their earnestness in religion. No doubt they had then acknowledged its moral sanctions. They had regarded the gods as avengers of crime and patrons of virtue. But even then the imitation of the divine nature, as a moral principle, was unknown to them. They gloated, Greeks and Romans alike, over the stories of lust and violence ascribed to the objects of their worship, and if they feared the divine power never dreamed of adoring the divine goodness. Their religious practices were not moral acts, but adopted as charms to preserve them from the caprice or ill-nature of the power above them. From this debasing superstition even their strongest intellects could not wholly release themselves, while the general relaxation of positive belief in the educated class was accompanied, as is commonly the case, with still more grovelling prostration on the part of the ignorant.

Such a society already trembled on the verge of dissolution. Thoughtful men shuddered at the frailness of the bands which still held it together, and the manifold energies at work for its destruction. Catilina's designs, suspended for a moment, were ripening to another crisis, and the citizens pointed with horror to the victim of a guilty conscience, stalking through the streets with agitated gait, his eyes bloodshot, his visage ashy pale, revolving in his restless soul the direst schemes of murder and conflagration. Involved in ruinous debt, his last hope of extrication had been the plunder of a province. The spoils of the prætorship had been wrested from him by his accuser, and access to the consulship denied him. But his recent escape assured him that he was too noble a culprit to be convicted : he scarcely deigned to veil his intrigues while he solicited the aid of

men of the highest families in the city. The young prodigals called for *new tables*, or the abolition of debts. Such was their chief aim, but with that, or after that, they would gaily rush into a revolution, and make a division among them of the public offices. Among these desperate plotters were two nephews of Sulla. Autronius and Crassus had been candidates for the consulship; Bestia was a tribune elect; Lentulus and Cethegus, both members of the Cornelian house, were nobles of distinction, but lost in character; even the actual consul Antonius was suspected of privity to their designs. They counted upon the support of the men who had been ruined by Sulla, and hoped to inflame the turbulence and lust of rapine which animated the dregs of the populace. They expected moreover the armed assistance of many of the disbanded veterans, who had already squandered the estates they had so suddenly acquired. They proposed to invoke the latent hostility to Rome which even yet smouldered among the Italians. Finally, they proposed to seize the gladiators' schools at Capua, and some would even arm a new insurrection of slaves and criminals. This last measure was the only enormity to which Catilina would not consent.

Among the Optimates some were not wanting who watched the coming storm with secret satisfaction. Too much of their power, they felt, had been surrendered to their military patron and they longed for an opportunity of resuming it in his absence. They fretted at the contempt into which they had fallen; the consulship and pontificate had become the prey of any daring adventurers; the example of usurpation had now descended to mere cut-throats and robbers; they would check it once and for ever by a signal chastisement; they would let the great Pompeius himself know that they could save and rule the state without him. The progress of Cicero in general esteem formed an important element in their calculations. By placing him in the consul's chair they hoped to secure him for their instrument, and to employ his zeal and abilities in the great work they contemplated, the restoration of their own ascendancy. Cicero was already in favour with the people, who were easily induced to advance him. He had been prætor in the year U.C. 689.
B.C. 65. 65, but had refused to quit the forum for the sordid emoluments of a province. He was next designated for the consulship; and the insignificance of Antonius, the colleague assigned to him, showed that to him alone all parties looked for the salvation of the state. He entered upon his office in 63, and proposed various measures, devoting himself, however, sedulously to the interests of the

oligarchy, with which he now began to feel himself connected. As the year advanced the schemes of Catilina drew all attention, the conspirators awaiting the issue of the consular comitia for the
 U.C. 691. next year, at which he still pretended to seek a legitimate
 B.C. 63. election. When his suit was once more rejected he no longer meditated delay. An accomplice named Curius had betrayed the secret to his mistress Fulvia; she had promptly communicated it to Cicero, and under his instructions obtained every particular of the intended outbreak. The information was laid before the Senate, and a decree passed that the consuls should provide for the safety of the state.' But every move was hazardous. We have seen how illustrious were the names involved. The time had passed when the consul could venture to draw his sword, like an Ahala or an Opimius, call the citizens to follow him, and rush boldly upon the wretches whom the Senate had denounced as its enemies. Though the nobles still claimed this power for their champion in the last resort, it violated a principle which the people would never surrender—that every citizen accused of a capital crime might appeal to the tribes. Such dubious friends as Cæsar and Crassus, and others, would have been on the watch to baffle it. But the danger was imminent. The conspirators were completing their preparations and collecting their arms. They had fixed a day for the rising, and assigned to each his post and office. The veterans, long solicited, were flocking to their rendezvous. The fleet at Ostia was supposed to be gained, and assistance promised from Spain and Africa. The legions were with Pompeius in the East, or dispersed in the provinces; the city was not defensible. The Capitol itself, some years back, had been seized and retaken in one day. Rome had neither a garrison nor a police; all her citizens were soldiers, a force united against a foreign enemy, but at home divided among themselves. At the concerted moment the various bodies of insurgents were to advance simultaneously against her, and their accomplices within the city were to fire it in a hundred places.

By good fortune two proconsuls, Marcius Rex and Metellus Creticus, arrived at the instant from the East with some troops, and awaited at the gates the triumph which they demanded of the Senate. Marcius was immediately directed against Mallius, Catilina's lieutenant in Etruria; Metellus was ordered to make head against the insurgents in Apulia. Some hasty levies were despatched at the same time to encounter the men of Picenum. The gladiators were removed from Capua, and distributed in small numbers among the

neighbouring towns. Rome was placed, according to the modern phrase, in a state of siege. Citizens were enrolled, guards posted at the gates, the walks and streets patrolled; Cicero assumed the military command in the city, and marshalled his countrymen against their invisible foe.

Both parties were now ready for the encounter, when the consul boldly summoned the arch-conspirator to discover himself. On the 7th November he had convened the Senate in the temple of Jupiter Stator, on the Palatine. Catilina appeared in his place; his fellow-senators shrank from contact with him, and left a vacant space on the benches beside him. Then the consul arose and poured forth the famous oration, the first Catilinarian, which portrays more vividly an actual scene in Roman history than perhaps any other monument of antiquity. The position of the actor was a peculiar one. He was perfectly informed of the criminal's guilt, and he did not scruple to let him know it in terms which must bring conviction to his mind; but at the same time he dared not bring him to justice: he had too many friends in the Senate itself, too many timid people who would declare his guilt unproved, too many jealous people who would object to rigorous measures, and call them tyrannical. Cicero's object was to frighten him away from Rome, but to leave the way open; to make it impossible for him to show himself in the city, and feel that he could be safe only in his camp. As soon as he should repair to his friends in arms outside the city there would no longer be any doubt, and the privilege which still encircled him within it would drop off. From that moment the consul pledged his word to crush the movement, and to chastise the conspirators. He could point to a body of knights who were crowding the steps of the temple, and listening in violent agitation at the door a band of friends on whom he could depend to dart at his word upon the victim and tear him in pieces.

Catilina had kept his seat, full of rage and apprehension, yet trusting to the favour of his numerous connexions, and to the stolid incredulity of the mass of the audience; for the habitual use of exaggerated invective had blunted the force of truth, and rendered men callous to the most impassioned oratory. But at the threat of violence he started to his feet. He muttered a few broken sentences, appealing to his birth, his rank, his aristocratic sentiments, in gage of his loyalty, and in contrast to the pretensions of the base-born *foreigner* his accuser. But the senators, encouraged by the presence of armed supporters, groaned and clamoured around him, calling him

an enemy and a parricide. Then at last, losing all self-command, Catilina rushed wildly out of the chamber, exclaiming that he would smother the conflagration of his own house in the ruin of the city.

At nightfall he left the city unmolested, and threw himself into the quarters of his armed adherents in Etruria. He left instructions for his friends in the city not to quit their posts, but take measures to assassinate the consul if possible, and prepare for an outbreak as soon as he should appear to attack the city. Cicero might exult in the success of the harangue which cleared the way before him. Catilina by his acts had avowed himself an open enemy, however he might still seek to disguise or excuse his guilt to some of the chiefs of the Senate. His associates still kept quiet. The next thing to be done was to drive them also into overt rebellion. Served by a legion of spies, the consul tracked all their movements; but yet he dared not strike without written proofs against them. The imprudence of the conspirators at last placed such documents in his hands. They had ventured to tamper with some envoys from the *Allobroges*, a Gaulish people, who had come with petitions to the Senate against the tyranny of their Roman governors, but had met with no success. These people were returning home, galled at the reception they had encountered, when they found themselves solicited by an agent of the conspirators, and were easily induced to promise the aid of their countrymen to the general revolt which they were assured was in contemplation. But they presently proved faithless, and disclosed the intrigue to the consul. A direct confession was still required. Accordingly they induced *Lentulus Cethegus* and *Statilius* to affix their names to the document which should thoroughly compromise them, and then let themselves be arrested with this evidence in their hands. Meanwhile Cicero summoned the chiefs of the conspiracy into his presence. They came without mistrust, and were at once seized by his attendants, and led by himself before the Senate. The letters were produced. The culprits could make no defence. It was enough to declare that they were found guilty of correspondence with the enemies of Rome, with the intent of delivering up the city to the fury of the Gauls and the Etrurians. Rome might breathe again; the traitors were under arrest or in banishment.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The conspirators capitally sentenced and executed—The insurrection suppressed with the defeat and death of Catilina—Elections for the year 62—Conflict between the tribunes Cato and Metellus Nepos—Threats of impeachment against Cicero—The Senate refuses to combine with the knights—Clodius profanes the mysteries of the Bona Dea—Attitude of Pompeius on his return to Rome—Cæsar prætor in Spain—Pompeius celebrates a magnificent triumph—He is affronted by the Senate, and turns towards the popular party.—(B.C. 63–60.)

THE conspiracy thus critically divulged has been represented, in accordance with the evidence before us, as the work of mere private cupidity and ambition. But the ruling party sought to incriminate in it their public adversaries. They had already studied to implicate both Cæsar and Crassus in the machinations of Catilina at an earlier period. They now repeated the effort with increased virulence, and Catulus himself was foremost in urging Cicero to produce testimony against Cæsar. But to such a project the consul refused to lend himself. He was sensible that Cæsar's personal popularity could in fact screen from justice every culprit associated with him, and he came forward and declared himself convinced of his innocence. The great difficulty was still to be overcome; it would have been foolish to enhance it. Nine of the conspirators had been denounced, five were convicted and confined; it still remained to determine on their punishment. The law of the republic might invest the consul with power of life and death, on the Senate issuing its *ultimate decree*. But against such a stretch of prerogative the commons, as has been said, had always protested; it was contrary to the spirit at least of existing institutions. To the people accordingly Cicero could not venture to appeal, nor could he assume the responsibility of acting by the mere direction of his own order. He had scrupulously adhered to the forms of law. He had abstained from arresting the conspirators in their own houses, to avoid the violation of a citizen's domicile. He had not given Lentulus in charge to his lictors, but led him before the Senate with his own hand, because none but a consul might put a prætor under restraint. Finally, he caused the criminals to be declared *perduelles*, or public enemies, in order to strip them of the rights of citizenship, before proceeding to their punishment. He now threw himself once more upon the Senate. He restored to the assembly the sword it

had thrust into his hands. The fathers met in the temple of Concord, under the brow of the Capitoline. Precautions were taken against a popular outbreak. Silanus, consul designate, spoke first, and pronounced boldly for death. All the consulars followed on the same side. It seemed as if the meeting would be unanimous, for Crassus had absented himself, and Cæsar, it might be presumed, would gladly sacrifice the culprits whom he was anxious to disavow. But such a manœuvre Cæsar utterly disdained. He gave his vote for perpetual imprisonment, declaring, indeed, that to free and high-minded men such degradation was worse than death. It was felt, however, that the remission of the penalty of death was after all a mercy, and many now took courage to raise their voices for it. Cicero attempted to check the current of opinion, declaring that they had gone too far to stop short of the capital sentence; but his influence with them was not great—a master in the Forum, he was only a minister in the Senate. The fathers would have little heeded his counsel, had it not been reinforced by an energetic appeal from Cato, who pronounced for the execution of the criminals in a tone of deep conviction and unflinching courage. The audience swayed round again to the side of severity, and issued the fatal sentence. The knights, who waited impatiently for the result, were furious at the obstruction Cæsar had thrown in the way of justice, and could hardly be restrained from assassinating him when he appeared on the steps of the temple. Cicero took care that the decree should be executed forthwith. The criminals must be dispatched at once, unheard, and without appeal. He went himself to the house at the Palatine where Lentulus was detained, and brought him to the Tullianum, the prison under the Capitol, whither the prætors at the same time conducted the others. The executioners were at hand. Lentulus was strangled first; Cethegus, Gabinius, Statilius, and Ceparius suffered successively. When the consul, who had attended to the last, traversed the forum on his route homeward, he exclaimed to the crowds through which he made his way, ‘They have lived,’ and the people shuddered in silence.

The blow was, indeed, a bold one. Cicero must have been inspired with confidence to perform it by the success of the officers of the Senate, who had already repressed the movements of insurrection in every quarter. In Etruria alone was the resistance serious and obstinate. Cicero had purchased the co-operation of his colleague Antonius, whose vacillation had encouraged the conspi-

rators, by ceding to him the province of Macedonia when they should both retire from office at home. He had even placed him at the head of the troops opposed to Catilina in person, but he had furnished him with lieutenants on whom he could more firmly rely. While this army covered Rome another under Metellus occupied the Cisalpine, and cut off the rebel's communications with his Gaulish allies. Catilina had assembled 20,000 men, but of these one-quarter only were regularly equipped. Menaced both in front and rear, he turned from one opponent to the other, and was trying to shake the loyalty of Antonius, when the news of the executions at Rome threw him into despair. He was now assured that the Senate would never retreat from its position; even the gaining of Antonius would only postpone for a few days the ruin which must eventually overwhelm him. His men too deserted him by whole cohorts, and he soon found himself at the head of no more than 4,000 followers. He attempted to penetrate the Apennines; it might yet be possible to evade the forces of Metellus, gain the Alps, and excite an insurrection in the Province. But the defiles were closed against him, and again he thrust himself upon Antonius. The consul affected sickness, and entrusted his legions to Petreius. The armies met not far from Pistoria; the struggle was desperate, but soon ended. Petreius was firm and able, and his soldiers fought with alacrity. The rebels perished for the most part on the ground they occupied; Catilina's body was found in advance of his own lines, among a number of slaughtered opponents. His head was cut off and sent to Rome for the assurance of the government.

The Optimates dwelt with grim satisfaction on the completion of their work, which seemed to prove that they could defend themselves henceforth without the aid of Pompeius. He had left them exposed to the attacks of the Marians, whose courage had revived in his absence; but trusting in themselves alone, they had crushed sedition and strangled revolution. They were ready now to defy the commander of their own legions. Cicero encouraged and partook of this rash confidence, and believed himself secure at the head of the party whom he had saved. But they for their part felt no devotion to their preserver, and were quite ready, perhaps even anxious, to sacrifice him, if ever they were themselves called to account. The danger to Rome may have been exaggerated; it is possible that the views of those who suffered were misrepresented, but Cicero, we may well believe, had done the state a signal service. So far we may accept his glowing self-appreciation; but as regards

his influence upon the general conduct of affairs, and his position in the party to which he clung, he was undoubtedly much mistaken.

While the generals of the republic were still hunting the common enemy in the Apennines the leaders of the Senate had begun to quarrel among themselves. The election for the ensuing year had fallen upon D. Junius Silanus and L. Licinius Murena. There had been bribery on all sides; prosecutions were threatened; but

U.C. 692. Cicero, intent on the frustration of the conspiracy, could

B.C. 62. not endure that attention should be withdrawn to the intrigues of rival candidates. His defence of Murena shows us how indiscreetly Cato, in his pedantic zeal for purity, could deal with public affairs. In the midst of these unseemly squabbles Cæsar made his way to the prætorship, and Pompeius from a distance was pressing the appointment of a creature of his own to a place among the tribunes. Cato at first withdrew his opposition in disgust, and when he returned and renewed it the time was passed. Metellus Nepos, the new tribune, at once attached himself to Cæsar, and combined with him to affront the dominant faction. The nobles succeeded, indeed, in averting an insult which Cæsar had directed against Catulus, and had required his name to be duly inscribed on the Capitoline temple, which he had been commissioned to restore; but this was an empty triumph. The execution of the conspirators had already been denounced as a murder.

Cicero, on resigning the fasces, presented himself to harangue the people and detail the events of his consulship. It was a proud day for him, and he was prepared to enjoy it. But Nepos abruptly interposed. 'The man,' he said, 'who condemned our fellow-citizens unheard shall not himself be listened to;' and he required him to confine himself to the customary oath that he had obeyed the laws. 'I swear,' cried Cicero, 'that I have saved the state!' The nobles applauded; Cato hailed him as 'the father of his country,' and the acclamations of the people were general. But Nepos threatened to recall Pompeius, not, as he pretended, to oppose Catilina, but to bear down the free action of the government. Cato, himself a tribune, vowed that while he lived no such rogation should pass. A scuffle ensued, in which Cato used actual violence; his colleague proclaimed that his sanctity was assailed, and fled to his patron's camp. The Senate declared his office vacant, for the tribunes were forbidden by law to quit the city, and at the same time suspended Cæsar from his functions as prætor.

Fresh disturbances ensued. Cæsar refused to leave his seat till

force was employed. Whereupon, dismissing his lictors, he withdrew with dignity to the Regia, the residence of the chief pontiff. The people now rose in tumult and compelled the consuls to restore him, with studious expressions of respect. Cicero had become already sobered from his recent intoxication. The coldness Pompeius observed towards his party mortified and alarmed him. Crassus also accused him of calumnious insinuations, and the enmity of Crassus was not to be despised. Threats of impeachment had been muttered. He was anxious to allay these resentments. He sought to appease Crassus, and proclaimed aloud his admiration for Cæsar's zeal, declaring that he had actually been the first to disclose to him Catilina's machinations. He who had lately exclaimed, 'Let arms give place to the gown,' now prostrated himself before Pompeius, whom he exalted above Scipio as a saviour of the state. He even looked for allies among the accomplices of the traitors, and took up the defence of P. Sulla, who was notoriously connected with them. Undoubtedly the genuine aim of Cicero had been to weld the senators and the knights together with a common interest in the government of the state, and this he thought he had actually accomplished on the steps of the temple of Concord. But when the Optimates spurned the alliance, and under Cato's direction upheld the prayer of the publicani of Asia, who asked relief from an improvident contract, he thought it most prudent to throw himself wholly upon the aristocracy, which had employed, but did not the less despise him. He failed to secure the real sympathy of Pompeius, of Crassus, or of Cæsar; while the surviving friends of Catilina vowed revenge against him.

Cæsar's suspension from the prætorship had only served to attach his party more closely to him; an incident, however, soon occurred by which it was hoped to sow discord between them. P. Clodius, the corrupt accuser of Catilina, had ingratiated himself with the people by his popular manners. This beardless youth, already notorious for his debts and his gallantries, had made his way into Cæsar's house, in female attire, during the celebration of the rites of the Bona Dea, from which the male sex were strictly excluded. A servant-maid discovered him and gave the alarm; the mysteries were hastily veiled and the intruder expelled; but the assembled matrons hurrying home revealed each to her husband the sin and the scandal. The nobles affected great alarm; the pontiffs were summoned and consulted, and the people duly informed of the insult offered to the deity. As chief of the

U.C. 692.
B.C. 62.

sacred college Cæsar could not refrain from lending himself to the general clamour; but on the one hand the presumed delinquent was an instrument of his own policy, on the other his honour, his position, and his influence were compromised by the offence. He extricated himself from the difficulty by divorcing his wife, not as though she were convicted of the crime, but because, as he said, 'the wife of Cæsar should be beyond suspicion.' But he refused to countenance the action of the Senate and the consuls against Clodius, who was enabled, perhaps through his intervention, to borrow money from Crassus and bribe his judges. The nobles were disappointed and mortified, but they could at least sneer at the corruption of the knights; and the two orders remained more jealous and discordant than ever.

This process had been delayed by intrigues for several months. Meanwhile Pompeius had returned from the East, and reached the U.C. 693. gates of the city to demand a triumph in the first month of B.C. 61. The great body of his troops he had dismissed at Brundisium with the promise of lands to be divided among them. He did not scruple to divest himself of the ready means of quelling the feuds of the city, evidently trusting in his own transcendent merits to obtain all the personal honours he could desire, whatever party might be in the ascendant. The Optimates, indeed, regarded the act as an indication of weakness, and flattered themselves that he cowered before their imposing attitude. But the laws forbade him to enter the city while yet in command, and to the laws he studiously bowed, while he invited the Senate and people to meet him in the Campus and hear from his own mouth the policy he meant to adopt. Of his own actions he spoke magniloquently, but on civil affairs he was moderate and conciliatory. He declared his deep respect for the Senate, but withheld a word of approval of their recent measures. Cicero took occasion to speak, and enlarged with his powerful rhetoric on the dangers from which he had himself saved the state; but while the senators responded to his satisfaction, he was vexed to find that neither praise nor sympathy could be extorted from the great Pompeius.

The views of Cæsar were now beginning to open. He aimed at taking a military position in the commonwealth such as Pompeius and Sulla and Marius had assumed before him, and thereto ready access might be obtained by military service in a province. The Farther Spain was offered to him; but two obstacles opposed themselves, the one the deep embarrassment of his debts, the other a

decree just passed, with the direct object of keeping him at home, that no magistrate should go abroad before the decision of the Clodian process. Cæsar's private means had been long exhausted, and he had been dependent upon friends and partisans. At this critical moment he could avow that he wanted 250 millions of sesterces (about two millions sterling) to be 'worth nothing.' Before he could enter on his government he had pressing creditors to satisfy and costly preparations to make. Crassus, the wealthiest of the Romans, was at his hand; for Crassus was jealous of Pompeius, and was willing to elevate Cæsar in order to lower a much loftier rival. He held in pawn the treasures of Spain while he advanced 200,000*l.* for Cæsar's most pressing needs. With the other impediment Cæsar ventured to deal boldly. He imagined that his enemies had it in view to impeach him, but once at the head of his forces they would not insist on his recall, and he abruptly left the city with the means provided him, and assumed his government in defiance of them.

The Senate was obliged to put up with this affront, but it soothed its wounded pride by mortifying Pompeius, withholding from him the formal ratification of his acts and the satisfaction of his veterans. It had conceded the honour of a triumph to Lucullus, with whom he had quarrelled, and to Metellus Creticus, whose disobedience he had resented. Now that the conqueror of Mithridates came himself to claim his just reward, it harassed him with ungracious delays, and it was not till nine months after his return that his triumph was actually celebrated. Meanwhile he had been compelled to intrigue for the election of Afranius, a creature
A.U. 693.
B.C. 61.
of his own, to the consulship, while Metellus Celer, a decided enemy, was nominated with him. He enjoyed, however, at last the glories of a triumph which lasted for two days, and made a display of spoils and trophies such as Rome had never before witnessed. The proconsul boasted that he had conquered twenty-one kings, and that Asia, which he had found the farthest province of the empire, was now left in its centre. Banners borne in the procession announced that he had taken 800 vessels, 1,000 fortresses, and 900 towns; 39 cities he had founded or restored; he had poured 20,000 talents (5,000,000*l.*) into the treasury, and almost doubled the national revenues. Above all he plumed himself on celebrating his third triumph over the third and last continent; the first had marked his victories in Libya, the second those in Europe, and now he had brought, as it were, the whole world within the sphere of his

conquests. Nevertheless on descending from his chariot Pompeius found himself alone in the city where he had been once attended by such crowds of flatterers and admirers. Lucullus, stimulated beyond his wont by the presence of his rival, attacked his conduct in every particular, declaring that all the successes he had achieved had been already fully prepared for him. The Senate was cold or hostile; Cicero relaxed in his adulation. Afranius was no match for Celer, and the ratification of the hero's acts was still petulantly withheld. He instructed a tribune named Flavius to demand lands for his veterans.

U.C. 694. Cato and Celer again opposed him; riots ensued. The
B.C. 60. consul was carried off to prison, but the Senate insisted on his release, and Pompeius was obliged to give way. Deeply chagrined at the treatment he experienced, he might now regret the disbanding of his legions, and the more so as the approaches he began to make to the popular party met with little response. Cæsar was already lodged in their hearts, and they cared for no other favourite.

CHAPTER XL.

The nobles lean upon Cato—Cicero and Pompeius draw nearer together—Cæsar quits Spain, and sues for the consulship with the assistance of Pompeius and Crassus—The 'first Triumvirate'—Cæsar's consulship, B.C. 59—An important epoch—He advances the claims of the people and the provinces—Cæsar assumes the command in Illyricum and the Cisalpine—The people insist on adding to it the transalpine province—Cæsar gives his daughter Julia in marriage to Pompeius—Tribunate of Clodius hostile to the Senate—He impeaches Cicero before the people, and drives him into exile—Cato is removed from Rome by an odious mission to Cyprus—Clodius offends Pompeius and Cæsar—Cicero is recalled.—(B.C. 60-57.)

THE destruction of Catalina, the humiliation of Pompeius, and the momentary removal of Cæsar had inspired the oligarchy with blind confidence, and they were not indisposed to follow to extremity the furious leading of their champion Cato. Cicero was piqued at their preferring a rigid and impractical declaimer to a discreet and philosophic statesman such as he deemed himself. His remarks on Cato are pointed no doubt by mortified vanity, nevertheless they are substantially just, and show with sufficient clearness how hopeless was the cause committed to such guidance. 'No man,' he said, 'means better, but he ruins our affairs; he speaks as a citizen of Plato's republic, not as one dwelling amid the dregs of Romulus.' 'We have only one statesman,' he added, meaning Pompeius; for

he was now drawing nearer to the chief who alone began to discern his merit, and had recently signalised the acts of his famous consulship. Pompeius had declared before the Senate that his own exploits would have been performed in vain had not Cicero preserved the city to applaud them. The orator, who had been shocked at the agrarian law of Rullus, now supported a very similar motion proposed by Flavius at Pompeius's bidding. He felt his own inconsistency, and excused it by the folly of the nobles, whom he might no longer lead, and could no longer serve. The Optimates no doubt were living in a fools' paradise amidst their palaces and fish-ponds, from which he augured their rude expulsion.

If, however, the dominant party was feeble, its opponents in the absence of Cæsar were irresolute and disunited. Cæsar had found himself in Spain in command of two legions. He had set himself promptly to make war upon the natives, ingratiating him with his officers and soldiers, and collecting plunder for himself as well as for them. One campaign sufficed to free him from his pecuniary embarrassment, and to make him sensible of his own military talents. Thereupon in the course of the year 60, as the period of U.C. 694. elections for the ensuing term drew near, he threw up his B.C. 60. command without awaiting the arrival of a successor, and appeared suddenly before the city. He claimed a triumph, but the law in strictness required the candidate for the consulship to present himself three times in the forum, and an imperator might not enter the city. An indulgence in this respect had in later years been sometimes conceded, and recently to Lucullus; but the nobles chose now to withhold it, and, contrary to their expectation, Cæsar at once relinquished the triumph and sued for the civic magistracy. At the same time he made it his care to effect a junction between Pompeius and Crassus, and to ally himself with both. The three chiefs pledged themselves neither to speak nor act except with a view to the common interest of all. The glory of the first, the wealth of the second, and the popularity of the third combined to give to this triumvirate, or self-appointed commission of three for the government of the state, a paramount power over all public affairs. The members of the league were not, however, sincere in their alliance. Each retained his own personal views and worked directly for them. Each looked to the first place in the commonwealth, Pompeius as the reward already due to his merit, Crassus as a prize which might some day be purchased, Cæsar as an object for the constant exercise of his genius. It was Cæsar that reaped the first fruits of this

combination ; for his colleagues pledged themselves to raise him to the consulship.

With this aid, and that of a wealthy candidate, Lucceius, who engaged to defray a large part of his expenses, Cæsar carried his election ; the nobles opposed him vehemently, but could do no more than secure the election with him of their own nominee, Bibulus. Cato himself had yielded to the urgency of the crisis, and acknowledged that bribery must be used against bribery. The consulship was the fulcrum from which the Roman world was to be moved, and Cæsar now courted the people more assiduously than ever, to secure the appointment to an extensive command. He distinguished his term of office by the enactment of an agrarian law, which embraced the assignment of lands to the Pompeian veterans, together with the distribution of large public domains in Campania among the poorer citizens. The nobles resisted as of yore, while Cicero retired to his villas, and shrank from taking part with either faction, and Cato mismanaged the opposition as foolishly as usual. When the people were summoned to vote for the bill the forum was thronged with

A.U. 695, armed men introduced by Pompeius. The nobles were

B.C. 59. not wanting in courage. Bibulus, supported by Cato and Lucullus, advanced to Cæsar's chair, and abruptly dissolved the assembly, on the plea that the signs of the heavens were unfavourable. The populace attacked him furiously, and cast him down the steps of the temple of Castor ; two of the tribunes were wounded, Lucullus nearly killed ; Cato was twice dragged by main force from the rostra, and the law was finally carried by the rout of the opposing faction.

Cæsar's consulship was an epoch of grave importance in the history of the republic, from the authoritative expression it gave to the views of the popular party. While the nobles, dismayed at their recent discomfiture, shrank from all public action, and Bibulus shut himself up in his house, declaring a justitium, or cessation of all business, through the remainder of his term, Cæsar was proposing laws in the comitia for regulating the tribunals, for controlling the proconsuls, and for elevating the population of the provinces in the scale of Roman society. From the first he had declared himself the patron of the oppressed provinces, and now that occasion offered he did not forget his promises. The people applauded his liberal measures from no liberal sympathies of their own, but rather as a defiance to the faction they hated, and treated the contest of Bibulus with Cæsar with bitter mockery. Cicero, more thoughtful, but perhaps

not really wiser, was alarmed at a broad and generous policy, the principles of which he could not understand. Refraining from the life of the forum, he wandered from Tusculum to Formiæ, the seats of his favourite villas, engaged in the study of rhetoric and philosophy, but still looking wistfully back to the arena of public life. He watched for advances to be made to him, and expressed his constant alarm lest the triumvirs should seduce him into alliance with them. The movements of Clodius, who was seeking adoption into a plebeian house as a step to the tribunate, caused him much uneasiness; for he regarded it as a prelude to an attack upon himself, and he could no longer trust to the favour of the people. The disquietude of public men and the irritation of their feuds and jealousies, were marked by the dark story of a meditated crime. A villain named Vettius was discovered with a dagger on his person, and avowed he had been suborned by Cato and other nobles to assassinate Cæsar and Pompeius. The nobles retorted that the pretended plot was the fabrication of Cæsar himself. The culprit was thrown into prison, and was found some days after dead in his bed. Every statesman in turn was incriminated in the affair, but if inquiry was made no result was obtained—suspicions and anxieties remained.

All parties may have felt it a relief when Cæsar's fatal consulship drew to a close. Every obstacle had fallen before him, every rival had yielded to his ascendancy; he had committed himself by no false step. In the confusion of affairs the avowed debility of the Senate and the corruption of the people he saw that the days of the free-state were numbered. The example of Pompeius, expecting in fretful inaction the offer of supreme power, warned him that the sovereignty of the empire must be seized, not waited for. He resolved to quit the city, gather strength and resources in the field of foreign adventure, and at the fitting season invade his country and demand the prize as a conqueror. But his nature was frank and generous, and we may believe that he was already impressed with a sense of the benefits he might thus confer upon Rome and the empire under the personal rule of a large-minded administrator. The example of Alexander was the star which guided him, and all the world believed that the conquests of Alexander had extended through the world the blessings of civilisation previously confined to Greece alone. The people, whom he had delighted with a succession of shows and largesses, promptly set aside the decree of the Senate, which had assigned him a paltry commission nearer home,

and offered him, his colleague in vain protesting, the provinces of the Cisalpine and Illyricum for five years, with an army of three legions. The city had been recently alarmed by renewed movements among the conquered tribes beyond the Alps. The Allobroges, on the outbreak of Catilina's insurrection, had risen, but had been put down by the proconsul Pomptinus. The Helvetii, however, were preparing for a great national migration, which threatened encroachment on the Province and a general disturbance of the people. Strong measures of repression were called for. We know not what intrigues were set in motion to conciliate or overrule opposition; but Pompeius had been drawn still closer to Cæsar by marriage with his daughter Julia, and, in spite of Cato's warnings, the Senate not only acquiesced in the assignment by the people but added to it the transalpine province also. The proconsulate of Cæsar in the West might now rival in importance the extraordinary Eastern command lately conceded to Pompeius. The precedent of the Manilian bill could not long remain without its natural consequences.

After vacating the consulship at the end of the year 59, Cæsar still lingered outside the walls to watch events while pretending to complete his levies. The consuls were C. Gabinus U.C. 666.
B.C. 58. and L. Calpurnius Piso, the one devoted to Pompeius, the other attached to the interests of Cæsar. Clodius had obtained the tribuneship with aid from Cæsar, and the shameless demagogue found himself in a position not less powerful than the consulship itself. Pompeius courted him as an apt instrument for humbling the senatorial faction. The consuls were necessitous and greedy, and with the favour of the people the young tribune could promise them the reversion of two lucrative provinces. He confirmed his influence by popular measures, requiring that the usual cheap supply of corn to the citizens should be henceforth wholly gratuitous, and forbidding the consuls to dissolve the comitia under pretence of 'observing the heavens.' He re-established also the ancient *colleges* or guilds of trade, which the Senate had recently suppressed. He annulled the most despotic prerogative of the censors, as the ministers of oligarchic authority, forbidding them to degrade knight or senator at their sole discretion. He next set himself to work the downfall of his personal enemy Cicero. He moved the people to interdict fire and water to whosoever should have inflicted death on a citizen without an appeal to the tribes. No culprit was named, but Cicero clearly pointed at. Cæsar would have removed the orator from danger by offering him

an office in his province, but this he had sullenly declined. He descended into the forum in the garb of a suppliant, and invoked the assistance of his friends and the compassion of the multitude. Great numbers of the knights put on black, and attended him from house to house as he pleaded his cause. The senators exerted themselves in his behalf, but the consuls resisted, and the tribune raised a tumult in the streets, and pelted Cicero and his melancholy cortege with mud and stones. The victim appealed at last to Pompeius for protection, but Pompeius coldly repulsed him. Clodius convened the tribes outside the walls to allow the attendance of Cæsar, who reminded the people of his own vote against the capital sentence, and repeated his condemnation of it, at the same time faintly dissuading them from the indulgence of revenge, and exhorting them to condone the offence. While the discussion was still in progress Cicero quitted the city, hoping to anticipate a public condemnation by voluntary exile. But Clodius was implacable. He carried his resolution, and caused sentence to be pronounced against the consular by name. Cicero was banished four hundred miles from Rome, or beyond Italy. It was declared capital even to propose his recall. The barbarous formula which interdicted fire and water and allowed the exile to be slain with impunity was of course a dead letter. The fugitive was indeed treated with respect and kindness on his way to Brundisium, from which he derived some encouragement for the future. Clodius proceeded, however, to confiscate his estates, gave his cherished villa at Tusculum to be pillaged by the consuls, and razed the mansion on the Palatine to which he had lately migrated from the modest dwelling of his obscurer years. A portion of the site the tribune shamelessly consecrated to the goddess Liberty, hoping to render its restitution impossible.

The triumvirs enjoyed with calmness and reserve the sentence which struck the Senate through Cicero. The nobles were mortified and dispirited, but far more at the affront to their policy than to the penalty inflicted upon the man who had been their instrument. Yet their policy was not fully discredited as long as Cato remained at their head. It was determined to remove him from the city, and if the duty assigned to him could bring him into difficulty or disrepute, the better would his enemies be pleased. At the instigation of his patrons Clodius engaged the people to impose upon the most just and virtuous of the Romans the odious task of dispossessing Ptolemy, king of Cyprus, upon grounds wholly iniquitous or frivolous. He was required to bring the luckless monarch's treasures

to Rome, and to annex his island to the empire. To this cruel charge another was added, hardly less tyrannical, the restoration of certain political exiles to the commonwealth of Byzantium. Cato acted in blind obedience to the orders of the people; perhaps he was really insensible to any injustice perpetrated by his own countrymen. But if Clodius hoped to corrupt him by the handling of so much wealth, he was disappointed, and when Cato returned, two years later, the demagogue had fallen too far in popularity to be able to damage his credit by false insinuations. Of the long list of demagogues and popular tribunes Clodius was the weakest as well as the most dissolute. His head was soon turned by his successes, and after rewarding the consuls with important provinces, he ventured to affront both Cæsar and Pompeius. He urged the repeal of some of Cæsar's enactments, but he used actual violence against an adherent of Pompeius, and the great man himself, thus insulted, was met with contemptuous sarcasms. He was led at last to believe that a plot was formed for his assassination, and actually withdrew from public view, and confined himself to his house. Cæsar came to his rescue, and the ensuing elections freed him from persecution, while it raised some decided friends of Cicero to the consulship.

On entering upon their office the new consuls at once demanded the orator's recall. They declared that the tribune's pretended adoption had been informal, and all his acts vitiated; that the U.C. 697.
B.C. 57. motion which had affected Cicero was a *privilegium*, as directed against an individual, thereby contravening a fundamental rule of Roman law. The demagogue, divested now of the authority of office, could make no effectual reply. His resource was to call upon his personal adherents to threaten violence. The nobles retorted, if they did not commence the fray, by arming a band of swordsmen under their creature Milo. Day after day the opposing parties met and shed one another's blood in the sight of the affrighted citizens. The contest continued for seven months, for Pompeius lacked resolution to quell it. At last in August the faction of Milo had gained the ascendancy, the tribes could meet and deliberate, and the recall of Cicero was voted with acclamations.

The patriot's return was likened to a triumphal procession. From the moment of his landing at Brundisium to his entering the gates of Rome he was received with unbounded rejoicings. All Italy came out, as he tells us, to meet him. The citizens redoubled the cries with which they had hailed him before as the father of his

country. He had been, however, seventeen months in exile, and the weakness of his character had been revealed, perhaps even to himself, by the unmanly dejection to which he had succumbed. In the overthrow of his own greatness he had forgotten the degradation of his country; he had shown in the hour of trial that Rome was only the second object of his thoughts, and himself the first. Nor could he disguise from himself that he had been made, and must still continue to be, the sport of men far his inferiors in ability and honesty. His dream of conciliating public interests and classes had vanished. The free state was evidently doomed to perish, and he had saved it only for the moment. The signal exploit of his own career was destined after all to be cited hereafter as no better than a splendid failure.

CHAPTER XLI

Cæsar in Gaul—His campaigns in the east, the west, the north, and the south—His advance into Germany, and two invasions of Britain, B.C. 58–54—Pompeius obtains an extraordinary commission for supplying the city—Question of restoring Ptolemæus to Egypt with an armed force—Pompeius baffled by the Senate—Cæsar's intrigues at Lucca—Pompeius and Crassus consuls for B.C. 55—They extend Cæsar's government for a term of five years—Tumults in the city—Danger of Pompeius—Alarm and death of Julia—Cæsar's administration in Gaul—Revolt in the north-east, and subjugation of the Remi, the Treviri, and the Nervii, B.C. 53—Revolt of the central states—Affair of Alesia and surrender of Vercingetorix—Conquest of Gaul completed B.C. 51—Cæsar organises the country in his own interest—His popularity with his soldiers.—(B.C. 58–51.)

CÆSAR had entered his province in the spring of the year 58, and during the following years was intently occupied in subjugating the tribes of Gaul from the Rhone to the Seine, the Rhine A.D. 696. and the Atlantic. He had forbidden the restless Helvetii to B.C. 58. cross the Rhone where that river issues from the lake Lemannus, and pour themselves into the Roman province. With a chain of earth-works he had barred the passage, and driven them to take the right bank of the stream, and so effect their purpose of moving westward. He had quickly followed them on their track, routed them first on the banks of the Saone and pursued them to the neighbourhood of Bibracte, among the upper waters of the Seine, where he had finally crushed them. From thence he had turned his arms against the Suevi, a German tribe, who under their chief Ariovistus, had crossed the Rhine and approached Vesontio. He drove these in-

vaders back into their own country ; and having relieved the more settled communities of Gaul from both their assailants, set himself to form alliances with some, and sow discord among others, so as to prepare the way, after the usual fashion of the Roman conquerors, for the eventual subjugation of all. The Ædui and Arverni in the centre of Gaul, the Remi in the north-east, were disposed, each with selfish views of their own, to assist in the ruin of their common country, and the apprehensions they had begun to entertain of the Germans allowed the invader to offer himself as the protector of

U.C. 697. Gaul. In the following year Cæsar broke the confederacy

U.C. 698. of the Belgic tribes in the north-east. In his next campaign he worsted at sea the naval power of the Veneti in Armorica, and reduced for the most part the north-western districts. At the same time his lieutenants were occupied in a successful attack upon the tribes of the south-west, which was known by the general name

U.C. 699. of Aquitania. Gaul was now for the most part pacified,

B.C. 55. but it became necessary to keep the legions in constant exercise, and to satiate their officers with fresh plunder. In B.C. 55 Cæsar advanced beyond the frontiers of his enormous province, throwing a bridge over the Rhine, and penetrating for an instant into the German forests. In the autumn of the same year he crossed into Britain with an army hastily equipped on the shores of the German ocean, and pretended at least to have effected his object in a short incursion of a fortnight only. Having perhaps beaten the natives in some slight encounters, and suffered much

U.C. 700. injury to his vessels by a high tide and tempest, he with-

B.C. 54. drew into Gaul for the winter. Again he attacked the islanders in the succeeding summer, landing on each occasion on the coast of Kent, but whether to the east or west of Dover is to this day keenly disputed. He made in this second campaign a rapid march into the interior, forced the passage of the Thames at a ford above London, and defeated the chief of the Trinobantes, the most powerful of the southern tribes, before his stockade in Hertfordshire. But his success was not such as to encourage him to leave a garrison in the country, or effect a permanent lodgment there. He was satisfied with the promise of a slender tribute, which probably was never paid after the return of his legions. He had occupied his troops, he had amused the people at Rome, who listened with delight to their hero's despatches, and he had allowed affairs at home to ripen for the grave crisis to which, through his partisans, he was gradually urging them.

During the progress of his campaigns the proconsul's vigilance had never been entirely diverted from the march of events in the city. Year after year he had repaired, when the season for military operations had closed, to the baths of Lucca, on the southern limit of his province, for the laws did not suffer an imperator to enter Italy while retaining his command, and there concerted with his friends, who flocked to him in large numbers from Rome, the measures most conducive to their interests and his own. During his absence the bands of the triumvirate had already sensibly relaxed. Pompeius and Crassus were pursuing their own private objects, each hastening, as he thought, to the occupation of supreme power. Cicero had given his adhesion to Pompeius; and a scarcity of corn occurring, he had moved that to him an extraordinary commission should be entrusted for supplying it. The republic was now familiarised with these monopolies of power. The consuls assented, and for the third time Pompeius was placed above the laws. He was authorised to demand supplies from any part of the empire, the prices to be fixed at his own discretion. The officers employed were to be of his own appointment; his powers U.C. 697. were to be continued for five years. Cicero himself ac- B.C. 57. cepted a place on the commission. The whole scheme was a mere pretence for putting the conqueror of the East at the helm of state, which four years before he had unwarily abandoned.

Nevertheless, whether from indolence or mismanagement, Pompeius seems to have gained no accession of strength from the powers thus placed in his hands. With ample means of providing for his friends and adherents, he found himself more than ever exposed to the intrigues of the nobles and the violence of the mob. He was defeated in an attempt to get a further appointment, which now offered itself as a prize for contending factions. The republic seems to have postponed the acceptance of the king of Egypt's legacy. The story of this legacy is, indeed, obscure and doubtful. It seems that at this moment the reigning sovereign, Ptolemæus Auletes, had been expelled by his subjects, and the Senate proposed to restore him by force. The public man to whom this business should be committed would require the command of an army, and doubtless he would obtain fame, power, and emolument. The government proposed to send one of their own party. The consular Lentulus, the tribunes in the interest of Pompeius, interposed, and alleged an oracle of the Sibyl, to the effect that the king must not be restored 'with a multitude,' a phrase which was deemed to

forbid the employment of an armed force. Lentulus was baffled; but when Pompeius through his greatness sought the appointment for himself he could succeed no better. The increasing turbulence of the popular demagogues rendered any decision impossible. The city became once more a prey to internal tumults; the nobles began again to put their trust in the violence of their champion Milo. The statue of Jupiter on the Alban mount was struck with lightning, and caused general consternation as a presage of impending revolution. Clodius seems to have sown dissension between Pompeius and

A.U. 698.

B.C. 66.

Crassus, and even alarmed Pompeius with apprehension of foul treatment from his colleague. At the same time the Senate were emboldened to talk of recalling Cæsar from his province, and exposing him unarmed to impeachment and exile or even death.

With the approach of winter Cæsar, as in the previous year, had repaired to his station at Lucca, and intrigued in self-defence to support the demagogues against the nobles, and to secure the consulship for Pompeius and Crassus. To Lucca consulars and officials of every rank flocked from the city. A hundred and twenty lictors, it was said, might sometimes be counted at his door, while two hundred senators, nearly one-half of the order, paid their court at his receptions. They returned to Rome, both senators and knights, full of satisfaction at his affable manners and his full-handed generosity. They were coming rapidly to the conclusion that the reign of equal law was approaching its end, to be succeeded by the ascendancy of an individual hero. The fatal crisis had, indeed, almost arrived. The machinery of the free-state could no longer work. The consuls and the tribunes, the Senate and the people, mutually checked each other's movements, and paralysed the action of the body politic. The election for the ensuing year was impeded, the consuls interposing under pretence of adverse auspices, and forbidding the tribes to assemble. Meanwhile they abstained themselves from all the duties of their office, clad themselves in mourning, refrained from the spectacles and from the solemn festival on the Alban mount, as men under constraint of the mob and deprived of their legitimate power. When at last the curule chairs were become vacant the impatient candidates disregarded the legal forms of an interregnum, and induced the tribunes to convene the people irregularly. While the nobles employed bribery for their nominee Domitius, young Crassus arrived from Gaul with a detachment of Cæsar's veterans, and overbore all opposition. The new consuls,

Pompeius and Crassus, having thus obtained their appointment by open violence, secured the other offices for their friends by similar outrage. M. Cato, who sued for the prætorship, was mortified by a rejection, which was rendered doubly vexatious by the infamy of Vatinius, whom the triumvir exalted over his head.

A.U. 699.
B.C. 55.

Cæsar had effected a hollow reconciliation between his colleagues at his conference with them at Lucca. He next secured for them, through the action of the tribune Trebonius, the important provinces of Spain and Syria, with unusual powers for making war. In return he obtained, through their assistance, the extension of his own government for a second period of five years. His province, they could urge, was only half-pacified, and required to be organised by the same strong hand which had so rapidly subdued it. But Cæsar himself looked forward to confirming his influence over his own legions, and seeing the authority of his rivals wane, during the further interval that was now allowed him, and deliberately calculated the period when the empire would drop into his hands. The resistance which the Optimates had made to this fatal concession had been petulant rather than determined. It was not Lucullus and Servilius and Cicero that now appeared as formerly at their head, and Catulus was already dead. Cato, who had lost much of his authority by daily collision with violence and vulgarity, and Favonius, a party brawler rather than a political chief, were the most active of their champions. These men tried to defeat the resolution by the length of their angry invectives, but could only retard the decision by one day. The tribunes on different sides engaged in the petty warfare of obstructing public ways and locking the doors of public buildings. Cato got himself lifted on men's shoulders in order to force his way into the place of meeting, and used the stale trick of declaring that the auspices were adverse. He was answered by the brandishing of clubs and by showers of stones; swords and daggers were drawn in the affray, and the friends of the Optimates were driven from the arena not without bloodshed. Such were the tumultuous proceedings by which the desperate policy of the triumvir was ratified. It was in one of these scenes of violence that the robe of Pompeius became sprinkled with blood. On his return home thus disfigured he was met by his youthful wife Julia, who was alarmed for his safety. Horrified at the sight, she was seized with premature labour, and died from its effects shortly afterwards.

U.C. 699.
B.C. 55.

In the first year of his command Cæsar had delivered Gaul from

the invasions of the Helvetii and Suevi, and he had effected the subjugation of the South. In the second he had imposed his yoke upon the fiercest nations of the North; in the third he had subdued the West. The campaigns of the fourth and fifth years had daunted the Germans and the Britons on their own soil, and closed the borders of his province against foreign succours. Gaul was now occupied within and fortified from without; the proconsul might hope to devote the remainder of his term to utilising its resources for his own future aggrandisement. His name was daily repeated at home with the liveliest acclamations; the great orator himself, forgetful both of his dignity and of his calling, was preparing to celebrate the 'Britannic War' in heroic verse. The chief of the popular party at Rome had adhered to the traditional policy of the Senate in supporting the nobles against the democracy abroad, and hoped to rule by the divisions he fostered between them. Wherever the popular form of government was suffered to exist he had been careful to create a Roman party, which swayed the assemblies and corrupted the Senate. He maintained a general convention of the states as a fiscal instrument, and with the tribute levied from one tribe purchased the services of another, while he soothed all alike with the charms of Roman civilisation and the prospect of Roman citizenship. But in fact the general resistance of the Gauls had not yet begun. Hitherto a few tribes had combated separately, and had one by one succumbed. The first great revolt against the Roman domination arose in the Belgic Gaul, and had for its centre the country of the Treviri. Among the nations who joined in it were the Nervii, the Eburones, and farther to the south and east the Lingones; but the Remi remained steadfast to Rome, and the Senones on the line of the Seine kept the movement from spreading southward. The Ædui between the Seine and Saone assisted in maintaining Cæsar's communications with Italy. The campaign of the year 54 was signalised by a great disaster to the Roman arms; but Cæsar promptly retrieved it, and relieved the camp of his lieutenant, the brother of Cicero, by a brilliant victory over the Nervii. In the following year he succeeded

A.U. 701.
B.C. 53. in quelling the insurrection of the North, and induced the tribes which had kept faith with him to wreak his vengeance upon the less faithful of their countrymen whom he proclaimed public enemies, and looked on complacently while the whole nation of the Eburones was butchered.

Gaul was pacified a second time, and the proconsul could again

withdraw beyond the Alps to observe the intrigues of the capital. But in the meanwhile fresh conspiracies were afloat among the conquered people. and this time it was among the central nations, between the Seine and the Garonne, that the flame burst forth and spread rapidly. It was kindled by the Druids, who were most powerful among the Carnutes, and who were closely connected with the national aristocracy of the country. At Genabus, on the Loire, the Roman traders had already established themselves in considerable numbers. The population rose; the strangers were surprised and massacred. The command of this widespread revolt was taken by Vercingetorix, a chief of the Arverni, the only name among the Gauls which attained to any distinction in these wars, and that perhaps a title rather than a personal appellative. But the man who bore it deserves to be better known to us, for even in the record of his enemy Cæsar he stands forth as a great military genius, and the struggle he maintained, brief as it was, is one of the noblest in the Roman annals. It was signalised by the victory of the Gauls at Gergovia, near the Allier, in which Cæsar's own sword was taken from him, and his retreat into Italy was cut off. To escape, indeed, from the Gauls would have been to throw himself into the hands of his enemies at home, and he had no alternative perhaps but to conquer beyond the Alps, or perish within them. His forces were still numerous to the north of the Seine; his lieutenant Labienus checked and worsted the tribes which had there assailed him, and the proconsul was enabled to unite all his legions and turn with a bold front upon the populations that were rising behind him. Thereupon another engagement ensued, and this time Cæsar was victorious. Vercingetorix led his routed followers to the city of Alesia, near the modern Dijon, and collected a force of 80,000 warriors behind the lines with which he surrounded it. Cæsar pursued, and completed another circumvallation in which he enclosed the whole Gaulish force, together with a vast number of unarmed fugitives who had sought shelter under their ramparts. This multitude perished with hunger between the two contending armies, and after many attempts to break out the troops of Vercingetorix were induced also to surrender by famine. Their gallant chief offered himself, indeed, as a sacrifice for them, and the lives of his followers were spared, but he was himself carried off as a captive, and reserved for the future triumph of the conqueror and the cruel death of a Pontius and a Perseus. The subjugation of the vast region between the Alps, the Rhine, the Pyrenees, and the Ocean was finally

completed in the eighth year of Cæsar's proconsulship. In eight campaigns he is said—but the boast is Plutarch's, not his own—to have taken more than 800 cities, worsted 300 nations, and encountered 3,000,000 of men in arms, of whom he had slain 1,000,000, and made prisoners of an equal number.

The final reduction of Gaul found the work of pacification already far advanced. Cæsar's policy differed from that of former provincial governors. The provinces on either side of the Alps had been placed under the control of garrisons and colonies. Great portions of their land had been wrested from the inhabitants, and conferred upon such Roman citizens as would exchange security at home for possessions to be maintained at the risk of their own lives abroad. But the ancient system of the republic could not be extended to the vast territories which she had now to organise. Nor was it Cæsar's wish to bring Rome, as it were, into the provinces; his object was rather to introduce the Gaulish provincials to Rome, and give them an interest in the city of their conquerors. The first step towards making them citizens was to lighten for them the Roman yoke. He established among them no badges of subjection in the shape of military colonies. He left them their lands as well as their laws and their religion. He allowed to most of their states a specious show of freedom. They retained their magistrates and Senates, guided perhaps by Roman agents. The tribute required of the provincials was softened by the title of military assessment. Honours and privileges were showered upon their chiefs and cities. But after all the manner of the magnanimous Roman won as many hearts as his benefactions. When he saw the sword which had been wrested from him in battle with the Arvernians suspended in the temple of its captors, he refused to reclaim it, saying, with a gracious smile, that the offering was sacred.

But Cæsar had yet another enemy within the bounds of his ample province. The Senate, towards whom his position had become one of open defiance, had established a stronghold of its own interests in the cities of the Narbonensis. From the time that Pompeius had led his legions through that country against Sertorius, driving the remnant of the Marians before him, the south of Gaul had been filled with the agents of the Senatorial party, and its resources applied to the furtherance of its policy. Since his return to Rome Pompeius had continued, in fact, to govern the district by the hands of Fonteius and other proconsuls, up to the moment of Cæsar's arrival. The new governor set himself to undo the work

of his predecessors. He exerted himself to recover the favour of the Massilians, by doubling the benefits his rival had already conferred upon them. He extended the limits of their territory; he projected, at least, the building of a city and naval station at Forum Julii. His adherents, both Roman and provincial, he rewarded with lands and largess, and placed the machine of government wholly in their hands. Meanwhile, he kept his legions ready for future service, and at the same time placed himself at the head of the gallant youth of Gaul, from which he amply recruited them. The warriors, indeed, with whom he had effected the conquest had been principally of Gaulish blood; the republic had furnished him with no troops from Italy and a contingent which he had borrowed from Pompeius he had sent back when his jealous ally demanded it. The legions numbered the seventh, eighth, and ninth, which Cæsar found in the Cisalpine, were probably the levies of Metellus in that region when he closed the Alps against the retreat of Catilina. The tenth legion had been raised by Pomptinus in the transalpine province to combat the Allobroges. The eleventh and twelfth were the proconsul's hasty conscription within his province at the commencement of his first campaign. The thirteenth and fourteenth were enlisted also in Gaul to oppose the great confederacy of the Belgians. Of these the latter had been cut in pieces by the Eburones; but another fourteenth and a fifteenth also were afterwards levied in the Gaulish territories. But a small portion of these soldiers could have been of genuine Roman or Italian extraction; they were mainly levied no doubt from the native population of the states which had been endowed with the rights of Latium. The legions themselves were attended by an unlimited number of foreign cohorts, equipped as the legionaries and placed under the same discipline. The common dangers and glories of a few campaigns, side by side, had rendered these auxiliaries no less efficient than their regular comrades. One entire legion Cæsar did not scruple to compose of Gauls only, an innovation which caused perhaps some dismay among his countrymen. The helmets of these soldiers were distinguished by the figure of a lark, or a tuft of its plumage, whence the legion itself received its name *Alauda*. The Gauls admired the spirit and vivacity of the bird, and rejoiced in the omen. Fond of the excitement of a military life, vain of the consideration attached to the profession of arms, proud of themselves and of their leaders, they found united in Cæsar's service all the charms which most attracted them. No

captain ever knew better how to win the personal affection of his soldiers, while he commanded their respect. The general severity of his discipline enhanced the favour of his indulgence. Among Cæsar's contemporaries it was remarked with admiration that throughout his Gallic campaigns his soldiers never mutinied. The toils and privations they endured more dismayed the enemy than their well-known prowess in the field. Nothing could induce them, when captured, to turn their arms against him, while Pompeius and Lucullus had been constantly confronted by renegades from their own ranks. Gaul had been conquered under Cæsar by the Gauls themselves, and it was the Gauls who were now about to conquer the empire of Rome.

CHAPTER XLII.

Reception of the report of Cæsar's successes at Rome—Pompeius takes Spain and Crassus receives Syria for his province—Crassus goes forth from the city and is denounced by the tribune Ateius—His proceedings in the East—His attack upon Parthia—Difficulties of his march beyond the Euphrates—Disaster at Carrhæ—Crassus and a large part of his army fall into the hands of the Parthians—Crassus slain, and his remains insulted.—(B.C. 55–53.)

WHILE Cæsar kept his view steadily fixed on Rome during the long period of his absence, not less did his countrymen follow watchfully the career of their proconsul, his marches and retreats, his perils and his victories. They listened to the detail of his successes recited in the solemn decrees of the Senate. They beheld the buildings with which he decorated the city, covered with the trophies of the conquered Gauls, and admired the eulogies of their favourite orator, who had exalted his triumphs above the exploits of all their ancient imperators. 'Marius,' exclaimed Cicero, 'arrested the deluge of the Gauls in Italy; but he never penetrated into their abodes, he never subdued their cities. Cæsar has not only repulsed the Gauls, he has conquered them. The Alps were once the barrier between Italy and the barbarians; the gods had placed them there for that very purpose—to shelter Rome in the weakness of her infancy. Now let them sink, and welcome; from the Alps to the Ocean she has no enemy to fear.'

And this was the man whom she had only known a few years before as the profligate spendthrift, the elegant debauchee, whose amours with noble matrons had offended her grave and pious citi-

zens. Cæsar's transcendent genius had, indeed, extorted her acknowledgments through the growing lustre of his civil career, but his enemies might still hope, from the apparent weakness of his bodily frame, that he would sink under the toils of protracted warfare. But, as one campaign followed another, his countrymen heard with amazement how this sickly gallant was climbing mountains on foot, swimming rivers on skins, riding his charger without a bridle, and making his bed among the rains and snows of the inhospitable North, in the depths of forests and morasses. If he allowed himself to be carried in a litter he spared his body only to exercise his mind : he read and wrote on various and abstruse subjects, he maintained an immense correspondence, both private and official, and dictated to four or even to seven amanuenses at the same time.

The prolongation of Cæsar's command for a second period of five years might seem to indicate a decisive change in the practical working of the constitution. By the people it was held as a pledge of the future advancement of their hero to supreme power ; by the Senate it was viewed with bitter vexation, relieved only by the prospect which they inwardly cherished of his defeat and destruction amid the perils in which he had involved himself. Cato, indeed, had gone so far as to propose that he should be given up to the enemy on pretence of an imputed violation of the public faith. Pompeius and Crassus, however, were reconciled to their colleague's advancement, and had even laboured to promote it, for each hoped to profit by such a precedent. Pompeius, as proconsul of Spain, rejoiced to find himself once more at the head of an army. Six legions were assigned him for his government, but he was allowed to administer it through his lieutenants, and he pretended to make it a merit that he abstained from taking so great a command in person, and remained himself in Italy. This, however, was a flagrant violation of ancient usage. It was a step towards monarchy to which no citizen could shut his eyes, and for the moment it placed Pompeius on a higher elevation than either of his colleagues. He spent the remainder of his consulship in devising sumptuary enactments to appease the murmurs of Cato and other pedants in the Senate. With the people he sought to ingratiate himself by the arts of the most profuse of the demagogues, but found it difficult to recover the popularity he had once thrown away. In vain did he open his splendid theatre in the Campus Martius, the first edifice of the kind at Rome which had been built

of stone and destined for permanence. The vast circuit of its walls could accommodate 40,000 spectators, and it was adorned with gold, marble, and precious stones. That such excessive magnificence might not seem lavished on a work of mere luxury, a temple was attached to it dedicated to Venus the Conqueror, so placed that the seats might serve as a flight of stairs to reach it. The ceremony was attended by shows and games; five hundred lions were hunted in the arena, and eighteen elephants were opposed to trained bands of gladiators; but this latter sight was rather resented by the citizens, who were shocked at the sufferings of such noble victims.

Crassus had not waited for the termination of his consulship to seize upon his province. For sixteen years he had not appeared in the camp, and in the interval Pompeius had subjugated Asia, and Cæsar almost completed the reduction of Gaul. The proconsul of Gaul had crossed the Rhine and the British Channel, but no Roman had yet penetrated to the Indus and the Persian Gulf. Crassus vaunted that from his province of Syria he would reach the farthest limits of the East. Cæsar flattered his hopes, and Pompeius threw no discouragement upon them. But the nobles were uneasy and jealous, and by means of the tribune Ateius excited the religious scruples of the populace against a scheme of unprovoked invasion. Ateius met him at the gates of the city as he was quitting it, with a burning brazier in his hand, and casting incense into the flames, devoted the impious aggressor to the infernal gods. So well did he act his part as to make a deep impression on the minds of both citizens and soldiers, and from that moment the expedition of Crassus seemed to be attended by a succession of direful omens.

The Parthians, the most powerful nation of the East, who occupied the realm of Cyrus and Darius from the Caspian to the Persian Gulf, claimed descent from the tribes which inhabited the banks of the Ochus. They were an offshoot from the hive of nations known to the ancients and moderns by the general names of Scythians and Tartars. Two hundred years after the death of Alexander the Parthians had overthrown the Macedonian dynasty in Seleucia. The rulers of Antioch in Syria were only saved from these barbarians to fall under the yoke of the Romans. When the two great conquering races met at last on the banks of the Euphrates the tide of Eastern aggression was definitively checked. The power of Rome, though destined to fall at last under pressure from the North, served for many centuries as the last bulwark of civilisation, which the Greeks, who had so far extended it, had

proved incapable of defending. The Parthians had, indeed, at this time exchanged the rude simplicity of their nomade ancestors for the voluptuous pleasures of their Hellenic capitals, and had lost much of the spirit as well as of the manners of their great chieftain Arsaces. But their weakness resulted perhaps more from the divisions of their rulers than from the corruption of the nation, which still retained its fame for martial prowess, and for the expertness of its bowmen, who, clad in suits of mail, and mounted on agile horses, were equally formidable in the charge and in the retreat.

The new proconsul had no sooner arrived at the seat of his government than he directed the movements of his troops towards the Euphrates. Orodes, the Parthian king, made no attempt to dispute his passage. He entered the region of Osrhoene, captured several towns, and placed in them Roman garrisons; after which trifling exploits he retired to winter in Syria and make preparations for more important conquests. It was necessary to collect the means for a long and distant campaign by extorting tribute from subjects and allies, and grasping at the treasures of the holiest temples during this interval. The Parthians demanded whether his aggressions imported a declaration of war from the republic, or were merely a private undertaking of his own; and when he haughtily replied that he would give them an answer in their capital, their envoy Vagises smiled, and, showing the palm of his hand, declared that hair should sooner grow there than the Romans ever see Seleucia. The confidence thus felt or feigned made a great impression upon the Roman soldiery, who began to listen anxiously to the reports of the prowess of an enemy with whom they had never yet measured themselves, another and a harder race than the Armenians and Cappadocians whom Lucullus had chased over valley and mountain. These anxieties were increased by the publication of unfavourable omens which were their natural result. But to these Crassus gave no heed. He had secured the aid of Artabazes, king of Armenia, who assured him of an easy conquest; but he neglected his advice to advance to the upper waters of the Tigris through his own fertile and hospitable region, and determined to aim at Seleucia and Ctesiphon by a direct march across the desert of Mesopotamia. On this route he expected to pick up the detachments he had already advanced into the enemy's country, and persisted in shutting his eyes to the dangers which beset it. When

U.C. 700.

B.C. 54.

U.C. 701.

B.C. 53.

a violent storm shattered the bridge at Zeugma, across which he transported his army, he observed with a smile that 'he should have no further use for it,' words of evil omen which the event seemed to render prophetic. A treacherous guide enticed him away from the river and the foot of the Armenian hills into the sterile plains to the east of Edessa. The track, which was at first convenient and easy, soon became toilsome, for it was found to lead through deep sand and plains treeless and waterless, where the soldiers were exhausted by toil and thirst, and dismayed at the dreary scene around them. When at last the Roman officers, suspecting their guide's treachery, reproached him with the hardships of their journey, he coolly asked if they had expected to be led through a fair land like their own Campania, among fountains and groves, and baths and hostelries. He soon feigned an excuse for leaving them, and betook himself to the Parthians, whom he had so well served.

Crassus had advanced some days' journey eastward when he came to a stream, where he first found himself confronted by an enemy. Orodes had sent forward his vizier Surena to watch and check his movements. The first rumour of the approach of an enemy whom they supposed to have fled before them threw the Romans into confusion. Cassius, an able officer, advised that the line should be extended, to prevent the Parthian cavalry from outflanking them. But Crassus obstinately formed his troops in a massive square, and hardly allowed them to drink of the stream before he led them to the attack. The close Roman formation was useless against the light assault of the Parthian cavalry and the constant discharge of their arrows. Crassus ordered his son, the same who had lately served under Cæsar in Gaul, and had brought a contingent of a thousand Gaulish horse to his father's armament, to charge and dissipate the assailants. The youth pushed eagerly forward, and was soon detached from the support of the legions, surrounded and overpowered. The victors cut off his head and waved it on a pike within view of the main body of the Romans. Crassus had for a moment dreamt that the battle was won. He was now cruelly undeceived, and made but a feeble effort to revive the courage of his soldiers, among whose thinned ranks the arrows of the Parthians still fell with unabated fury. When evening fell the enemy at length retired, and the Romans sank exhausted on the ground. Crassus in his distress and despair proved utterly helpless. Cassius and other officers gave the signal for retreat, and the

remnant of the legions staggered through the darkness in the direction of Carrhæ, where they had left their furthest outposts. The Parthian cavalry followed in pursuit, but the garrison at Carrhæ coming to the rescue served to check them, and Crassus was barely enabled to get within the walls. The place, however, was judged to be indefensible, and the Roman forces were intent on making their escape in various directions. Cassius and other officers carried off portions of the broken army, but the Parthians came up with Crassus and were pressing closely on his rear and flanks. Could he hold out but a few hours longer he would reach the hills, among which the pursuing horsemen could do him no mischief. Surena allowed some of his captives to escape, after duly preparing them for his purpose by discoursing to them of the goodness and flexibility of the Parthian monarch. At the same time he sent to Crassus inviting him to capitulate. The escaped prisoners repaired to the Roman camp, and enlarged on the good faith and moderation of the enemy. Crassus himself distrusted them; but the army became clamorous, and the proconsul, who had never yet brought them under discipline, was compelled to yield. The Parthians made the fairest professions. A meeting was arranged to take place as between honourable if not equal opponents. The Roman imperator approached attended by his staff, but dismounted and lightly armed. Surena received him with marks of respect, and ordered a horse with splendid housings to be brought for his use. The feeble and bewildered old man was abruptly lifted into the saddle, and the Parthian grooms began to goad the steed and urge it towards their own cantonments. A Roman seized the reins, another attempted to cut them; confusion ensued and blows were exchanged. One or more on each side had fallen when Crassus himself received a mortal wound, and his officers were overpowered and slaughtered. A small remnant escaped to the main body, which the Parthians suffered to gain the shelter of the hills. Twenty thousand Romans had perished in the expedition; 10,000 had been captured; but these at least were well treated, and allowed, as it would seem, to settle in the country and renounce the land of their fathers.

The victors sent the head and hand of Crassus to Orodes, while he amused his soldiers and gratified his own vanity by the mockery of a Roman triumph. The proconsul was impersonated by a captive in female attire, and jeeringly addressed with the title of Imperator. The voluptuous habits ascribed to the Roman officers were turned into scornful ridicule. At the same time Orodes strengthened

his kingdom by allying himself with the Armenian, Artabazes, and taking his daughter in marriage. The festivals which followed were fashioned upon Grecian models. Orodes was skilled in the language and literature of Greece; Artabazes even composed tragedies in the style of the Attic masters, and wrote historical essays in their tongue. When the head of Crassus was brought into the hall a Greek actor from Tralles recited appropriate verses from the Bacchanals of Euripides; when the bloody trophy was thrown on the ground he seized it in his hands, and enacted with it the frenzy of Agave and the mutilation of Pentheus. Molten gold, we are told, was poured into the mouth of the avaricious Roman, a story quite in keeping with the scene, but one which has been repeated on various occasions, and seems in this particular instance to want trustworthy evidence.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Interregnum; and intrigues in the city—Reign of violence—Clodius slain in a fray with Milo—The nobles effect the appointment of Pompeius sole consul B.C. 52—Pompeius detaches himself from Cæsar—He surrenders Milo to be tried and banished—Tranquillity is restored—Cæsar's buildings in Rome—He demands a second consulship as necessary for his personal safety—He is affronted by the Senatorial party—Indecision of Pompeius—Cicero proconsul in Cilicia—Pompeius falls sick, but recovers—The sympathy of the Italians raises his confidence in himself—Cæsar's precarious position at the opening of the year 50—He is threatened with the loss of his province, while Pompeius refuses to surrender Spain—Curio supports Cæsar as tribune, declares his person endangered, and seeks Cæsar in his camp, while Pompeius arms in defence of the city.

THE slaughter of a proconsul and the rout of several legions, the gravest disaster which had befallen the Roman arms since the first victories of the Cimbri, made but a faint impression upon the citizens, whose whole attention was absorbed by the state of affairs at home. At a later period this famous defeat became the theme of popular and courtly poets, and the emperor was invoked to redress it by a signal effort. But at the time the effect which the death of Crassus might produce upon the coalition of the surviving triumvirs, already shaken by the decease of the daughter of one and the wife of the other, seemed of more vital interest. During the absence of Crassus from Rome corruption and insolence had advanced to more extravagance than ever, had generated a well-

founded despair of the republic, and driven the best men of the state to contemplate more and more the necessity of a dictatorship. The year 701 opened with an interregnum, which lasted for not less than six months. The flagrant bribery of the candidates had induced the Senate and the most honourable of the tribunes to combine in preventing the assembling of the comitia, U.C. 701.
B.C. 53. and on the 1st of January no consuls had been elected. But as time went on Cato himself became alarmed at the crisis, and prevailed upon Pompeius, as the only remaining power in the state, to require an election to be held. Pompeius, released from his close connexion with Cæsar, and informed by this time of the death of Crassus, gladly drew nearer to the party from which he had permitted himself to be estranged. When he interposed to facilitate the election of Calvinus and Messala, the nobles accepted his gracious advances, and hailed him once more as the champion of their interests.

The calm, however, which succeeded was of short duration. Again the election for the ensuing year was thwarted, and this time Pompeius was suspected of stopping the wheels of government. The year 52 opened, like the preceding, with an interregnum. U.C. 702.
B.C. 52. Milo, Scipio, and Hypsæus demanded the consulship with arms in their hands; every day was marked by some fresh riot, in which blood not unfrequently flowed. But amidst the obscure murders which disgraced this era of violence and ferocity there was one which caused a deeper sensation, and demanded stronger measures of repression. It happened that Milo was travelling on the Appian Way, accompanied in his carriage by his wife, and attended by a retinue of servants, and, as was his wont, by a troop of gladiators. Near to Bovillæ, a few miles from the city, he was met by Clodius, who was on horseback, with a small company of armed attendants. It does not appear that the affray which ensued was premeditated. To travel with an armed escort was not unusual even in the vicinity of the city, and men of violence, such as both Milo and Clodius, might be apprehensive of violence themselves. However this might be, a quarrel ensued between their servants, and Clodius, wounded in the struggle, took refuge in a roadside tavern. Milo gave way to his fury, attacked the house, and caused his enemy to be dragged forth and slain. The corpse lay in the road till it was picked up by a passing friend and brought to Rome. Here it was exposed to the gaze of the multitude, who worked themselves into frenzy at the sight. A riot ensued; benches,

books, and papers were snatched from the curia in which the Senate was wont to assemble; fire was set to the pile, and the flames which consumed the remains of Clodius spread from house to house over a considerable space bordering upon the Forum. The rioters proceeded to attack the mansions of several nobles, and particularly that of Milo himself. He was prepared, however, for the attempt, and repulsed the assailants with bloodshed. The knights and senators armed themselves to suppress the commotion, and quiet was restored after several days of uproar and violence. .

But this personal combat of two distinguished nobles in open day, the fury of the populace, the recourse of the chiefs of the city to arms for their own protection, the impossibility of maintaining the supremacy of the law (for Milo, scared by the clamour, dared not stand a trial, but proposed to fling himself into banishment), all too manifestly threatened the republic with anarchy and dissolution. Men of peace, such as Cicero, held aloof from these sanguinary affrays, and fled from a city where there was no longer a People or a Senate, where the laws were silent, and the tribunals timid or corrupt. The great parties which had formerly represented social interests had degenerated into mere personal factions, which sought power for the sake of violence and plunder. Few honest patriots still continued to haunt the forum or even to obtrude themselves upon the cabals of the Senate-house. Cato himself, as we have seen, though unshaken in courage, despaired of the ancient principles of the commonwealth. Liberty, he saw, was menaced by two dangers, within by anarchy, without by usurpation; and when he looked around for a defender he found, even in those whom Cicero had denominated the party of the 'good men,' so much cowardice and selfishness, that he at last resolved to demand from an individual that protection for the state which the laws could no longer assure to her. 'It is better,' he said, 'to choose a master, than to wait for the tyrant whom anarchy will impose upon us.' But there remained, in fact, no choice in the matter. There was as yet only one master at whose feet Rome could throw herself. With bitter reluctance Bibulus proposed the appointment of Pompeius as sole consul, and Cato supported him. They might hope that, content with this title, which sounded a little less harsh than that of dictator, the great man would use his power with moderation, that he would restore order in the city, and find means for compelling the proconsul of Gaul to surrender his province and disband his armies. The repression of scandalous disorders, the over-

throw of a licentious ambition, might after all be cheaply purchased by one year of despotism. Such was the fatal reasoning to which the friends of liberty were reduced, and they shut their eyes to the danger of the precedent they were establishing, while Pompeius declared that he would take Cato as his adviser, and rule the state in the interests of freedom.

The sole consul entered upon his office at the end of February 702. He now threw off all pretence of an alliance with Cæsar, and devoted himself without reserve to the policy of the Opti-
U.C. 702.
B.C. 52.
 mates His natural position he felt to be the head of the oligarchy. Twice already he had achieved this position, and twice he had imprudently relinquished it. The consulship was indeed an empty honour, but the proconsular imperium, which he still firmly grasped, he was determined never to resign, at the same time that he promised to wrest it from the hands of Cæsar. Meanwhile he was content to surrender Milo to the anger of the populace. The culprit, arraigned before a select body of eighty-one judges, enlisted Cicero in his defence. The great orator prepared to assert his client's innocence, and to congratulate the people on the issue of an act of self-defence which had struck down the arch-disturber of all laws, divine and human. But when he rose before the tribunal he was greeted by furious shouts, and was dismayed by the display of armed force which the consul had introduced into the forum. He stammered through a short and nerveless speech, and sat down leaving his task half-finished. Milo, convicted of the murder, was allowed to go into banishment, and chose Massilia for his retreat. On returning home Cicero composed for publication the speech he should have delivered in his defence. His vanity prompted him to send to his client the splendid declamation he had executed. The exile perused it, and sarcastically replied that he deemed himself fortunate that so convincing a speech had never been actually spoken; 'else,' he said, 'I should not be now enjoying the delicious mullets of this place.'

With the death of Clodius, the disappearance of Milo, and the dispersion of the armed bands which had kept the city in an uproar, tranquillity once again returned. The pupil of Sulla, the conqueror of the Marians, was justly feared by the disturbers of the public peace. But Pompeius was unable to conceive any large measures for the public weal. His laws against bribery and other specious measures were mere palliative expedients. Nor did he care to respect them in his own person. He had interdicted the eulogies

which the powerful friends of an accused man had been allowed to utter before the judges in his behalf; but when Metellus Scipio, whose daughter he had recently espoused, was cited before a tribunal, he condescended to speak himself in his favour, and thereby extort his acquittal. He had obtained a decree that no magistrate should have a province till five years after quitting his office at home; but this excellent enactment he promptly violated in his own case, by causing his proconsulship to be prolonged for a second term, while he was actually consul. Again, he had appointed that no man should sue for a public charge while absent from the city; but when he found it for his interest to facilitate Cæsar's election to a second consulship, in order to withdraw from him his Gallic legions, he made an exception to this law also.

The brilliant successes of the conqueror of the Gauls had impressed the minds of the citizens, to whom the name of the Northern barbarians was still fraught with its traditional terrors. Nor were his victories unproductive of substantial effects. The Curia Hostilia was burnt in the recent riot, and the site was used for new and more splendid structures. The halls of Julius, and of Æmilius, a wealthy magnate, rose together on opposite sides of the Roman forum, and marked on the north and south the original limits of the enclosure, while another space was cleared for the construction of a Julian forum, to give greater room for the circulation of the increasing multitudes of the city. Great had been the mortification of the Senatorial leaders at finding that, even at a distance, Cæsar could control the elections of the city, and few of the chief magistrates had succeeded to office during his absence without the support of his influence. When he now declared through his adherents his desire for a second consulship, he knew that he stood on firmer ground than ever. He could demand that the restrictions of the law should be relaxed for him, as formerly for his rivals. The concession, therefore, which Pompeius now made was doubtless extorted from him by the resolute attitude he assumed, and whatever grace it might have borne was lost by the evident reluctance with which it was accorded.

Neither was the demand itself an act of mere vanity or rudeness. It was a matter of vital importance to him, when his government was about to expire, even if it were not wrested from him by the impatience of his enemies, to light, at his return to Rome, on a position of security. Unless his personal safety were guaranteed by the dignity of the consular office, it would lie at the mercy of

inveterate foes, already prepared to impeach him for pretended misgovernment, if not to rid themselves of his presence by fouler means. Their ravings against him were loud and pertinacious. They watched every turn of his career with ill-dissembled anxiety; and whenever sinister rumours reached the city, when his subjects were reported to have risen against him, when his legions were represented as surrounded, his resources as having failed, his men as having mutinied or murmured, their demeanour plainly showed how much they hoped for the confirmation of the disastrous news, and how gladly they would have heard that the conqueror of Gaul had met the fate of the invader of Parthia. It was impossible for Cæsar to relinquish his government in the ordinary course, and return in a private capacity to Rome. He had attained an eminence from which there was no descent for him. He must step at once from the proconsulship to the consulship, in order to exchange once more from consul to proconsul. He could never lay down the ensigns of military autocracy. Was this necessity of his own making, or was it imposed upon him by his enemies? The question can never be precisely answered, the cause and the effect can never be disentangled. But it is most important to note what the position really was, for this was the critical point on which the impending establishment of the Empire turned.

At the end of six months Pompeius divested himself of the invidious distinction of the sole consulship, and caused his father-in-law, Metellus Scipio, to be associated with him. He had restored order in the city, he had given the tribunals a semblance of purity and justice, and the Senate seemed under his protection to recover a portion at least of its outward dignity. Before quitting office he took care to prevent the succession of Cato to the consulship, which he got conferred upon Serv. Sulpicius, a noble of high character, and on M. Marcellus, a violent aristocrat, and a creature of his own. Cæsar had just effected the destruction of Vercingetorix, and the people had constrained the Senate to decree a Supplication of twenty days in his honour. Nevertheless Marcellus demanded his recall, and was strongly backed by the partisans of the oligarchy. Confident of the support of Pompeius, these men discarded every restraint of justice and moderation. Cæsar had accepted the patronship of the Transpadane Gauls, and had founded a colony at Novum Comum, the modern Como. The Transpadanes had already acquired from Pompeius Strabo the Latin right, which at this time might give almost the consideration as well as the privileges of the

Roman franchise. In order to irritate Cæsar, Marcellus had caused a citizen of this Latin colony to be seized on some pretence and beaten with rods. He was not a Roman, indeed, nor had he served, it would seem, a magistracy in his own town, by which he would have acquired the immunities of a Roman. Marcellus may not have violated the express letter of the law, which exempted a Roman citizen from the degradation of the scourge; nevertheless the Romans themselves acknowledged that it was an indignity to scourge even a Latin, and both Cæsar and his friends in the city resented the act as a studied affront to the popular chieftain.

Pompeius seems to have become conscious that he had evoked a spirit of violence which he was unable to quell. He still hesitated to betake himself to his province, and remained in command of his legions even at the gates of Rome. But he had no intention of making use of them. A spirit of indecision and vacillation crept over him, as on other critical occasions. He visited his villas, shut himself up from the chiefs of his party, while Cato availed himself of his absence to thunder against the Gallic proconsul, and the oligarchs succeeded in removing their most prudent friend from among them, by urging upon Cicero the distant government of Cilicia. The orator was unwilling to quit the centre of affairs, the scene of his civic triumphs, on which he still dwelt with unabated complacency. Discarded as he had long been from the councils of his party, and treated, indeed, with unworthy scorn by the loudest brawlers among them, he still clung to the hope that all classes would at last combine to sue for his mediation, and that he should

U.C. 703.

B.C. 51.

save the state a second time. He was persuaded, however, and yielded. On his arrival in the spring of 51 he found the province menaced by the Parthians, in retaliation for the aggressions of Crassus; but Cassius, who had been left in command at the Syrian frontier, had baffled the advance of the enemy, and the new proconsul found no more serious affairs to undertake than the periodical chastisement required by the brigands of the hill districts within his own cantonments. His petty successes in this inglorious warfare earned him the title of emperor, and inspired him with the hope of obtaining a triumph. His civil administration was marked by integrity and moderation, and stood in startling contrast with the tyranny of other proconsuls.

The consul Marcellus was urging Cæsar's immediate recall. Pompeius, vacillating and feeble, would now allow him a respite of six months, which while it irritated him beyond the hope of recon-

ciliation gave him an interval for preparation. The conduct of Pompeius at this crisis was both treacherous and foolish. Even in the Senate it met with strong opposition. It may be surmised that the veteran statesman was at the moment succumbing to an attack of sickness from which he lay for a time at Neapolis with little hope of recovery. The report, however, of his danger roused the sympathy of the Italians. Their temples were crowded with devotees, sacrifices were offered and vows uttered for his safety; and when his health was declared to be restored, they rushed in crowds to congratulate their ancient favourite as he was slowly transported to Rome. It was a memorable example of the shortsightedness of mortals and the vanity of human wishes. The gods, said the Roman moralists, offered in their divine foreknowledge to remove the great Pompeius at the summit of his fortunes beyond the sphere of human change; but the cities and the nations interposed with prayer, and preserved their hero for defeat and decapitation. But Pompeius himself was not less blind than his admirers. He no longer doubted the extent of his resources and the charm of his great name. There were none to whisper how hollow these demonstrations were; that Italy would surrender without a blow, and the voices now loudest in their devotion would welcome the conqueror of Gaul with no less fervent enthusiasm. 'And what,' exclaimed Cicero from his distant retreat, 'are the prospects of a party whose champion falls dangerously sick at least once a year?'

At the beginning of the year 50 the state of the political game stood thus: The Senate had secured the accession of two consuls of their own party, of whom one, C. Marcellus, a cousin of U.C. 704. the late consul, was their devoted ally. The other, Paulus B.C. 50.

Æmilius, had in fact sold himself to Cæsar for the means of building his splendid basilica. It was arranged that early in the year the appointment should be made of a successor to Cæsar in Gaul, so that when he came to sue for the consulship he should have relinquished the command of his army, although the prolonged term of his government, if he abstained from such a suit, would not properly expire till the end of 49. On the other hand, the friends of Cæsar could threaten that if their patron were required to surrender his legions, the same should be required of his rival also, and that the illusory proconsulship of Pompeius in Spain should be brought to a no less speedy termination. Among the new tribunes was also one whose devotion to Cæsar could only be explained to his adversaries by the conviction that he was bought with Gallic gold. C. Scri-

bonius Curio was the son of a senator of high consideration, a firm though temperate adherent of the oligarchy. He had disgraced himself by the licentiousness of his habits; yet he was a youth not only of good parts but of amiable character, and a favourite with Cicero, who, despairing of his own contemporaries, still looked, with a pleasing enthusiasm, to the rising generation for some objects of political hope. But Cæsar found him in the midst of his embarrassments, and offered him present relief and brilliant prospects, by which he was too easily seduced.

The truce accorded to Cæsar had enabled him to crown the conquest of Gaul by the organisation of his resources. The Senate was also well furnished with arms. Pompeius maintained seven legions in Spain, which might be transported across the sea if the route of Gaul should be closed against them. But the senators in their sanguine calculations counted on the supposed disaffection of Cæsar's veterans to their commander, and the exhaustion of his resources. Ateius imagined that he could embarrass him by calling for the liquidation of a debt of fifty talents. When Pompeius was asked what he would do if Cæsar persisted in suing for the consulship, and refused to relinquish his command, 'What,' he replied, 'if my son should raise his stick against me?' The two parties were thus pitted against each other when, early in the year 50, the senators opened their batteries. Cæsar's powers, if he should elect to remain in his province, would expire at the close of 49, but C. Marcellus now proposed that he should be recalled from November next ensuing, thus depriving him of a full year of his appointed term. Curio replied with the threat of a counter-motion to apply a similar measure to the command of Pompeius. If this resolution were negatived he was prepared to put his veto on the other. He had concerted with his friends and was confident of adequate support. His adversary was out-manœuvred, and now resorted to violent language. But the people hailed Curio with acclamations, and matters were evidently hurrying to a crisis. Such menaces and retorts could not always explode and pass off innocuously.

Nevertheless, after the consul's first sally of spite and mortification no preparations were made for the impending struggle. If Marcellus applied to Pompeius, and urged him to concentrate in Italy the legions he commanded in the West, he was checked by the vainglorious confidence of the great warrior's reply: 'I have but to stamp with my foot to raise legions in Italy.' Thus reassured, the senators decided by a great majority that Cæsar should be recalled,

but that his rival should at the same time retain his powers. Curio vehemently remonstrated; the attitude of the people was alarming; the vacillating assembly gave way, and by a majority not less overwhelming than the first demanded the simultaneous resignation of both proconsuls. But the measure was in both cases prospective. Cæsar was collecting his troops from their quarters on the Gallic frontier, and gradually bringing them nearer to the Alps, while he had already stationed himself at Ravenna, on the very borders of Italy. Marcellus, as the year advanced, determined to anticipate the hostile movement which he too clearly foresaw; and seeking Pompeius in his Alban villa, thrust a sword into his hand, and invited him to take the command of all the troops in Italy for the defence of the commonwealth. Cæsar was still strictly within his rights, but the consul and his adherents had forced Pompeius into a position which was actually illegal. Curio felt or pretended that there was no longer any security for himself, in the presumed inviolability of his office, and after protesting against his opponent's call to arms and proclaiming that the laws had ceased to reign, he suddenly quitted the city, as the year was closing, and betook himself to his patron's quarters.

Cæsar had now acquired the excuse which would be sufficient, at least with the people, for striking the blow he meditated. Curio urged him to assume the offensive at once. Nevertheless he allowed his opponents to confirm the impression their violence had already made in his favour. He waited for the commencement of the year, when Q. Cassius and M. Antonius, two devoted partisans, would succeed to the tribunate and insist on the justice of his claims. He empowered Curio to offer his surrender at once of the Transalpine province, together with the troops which held it, retaining only the Cisalpine and Illyricum, with the moderate force of two legions. This proposal being, as he anticipated, rejected, he would still be content to lay down all his commands if Pompeius would do the same; failing the acceptance of this last condition, he would come in person to Rome, to avenge his own and his country's injuries. Curio, bearing these terms in his hand, was refused a hearing. The consuls, Lentulus and M. Marcellus, pronounced the state in danger, and the Senate declared that Cæsar should lay down his arms or be treated as a public enemy. Antonius and Cassius interposed their vetos; the people, they insisted, had granted his term of government, the Senate could not lawfully abridge it. But the Senate, resting upon a principle higher than the law, once more

declared the state in danger, and invited the people to invest themselves solemnly in mourning apparel. Pompeius sent some cohorts into the city, while he encamped himself at the gates. The consuls were empowered to act with a high hand, and convened the Senate to determine on the punishment of the refractory tribunes. When it was intimated to them that they would be formally expelled from the assembly Cassius and Antonius pretended to wrap themselves in disguise, and fled, together with Curio, as if for their lives. In leaving the city they signified that they threw up their outraged office, for the tribune was forbidden to step outside the walls during his term of service. Arrayed in all the dignity of violated independence they knew that they should be eagerly received at the proconsul's quarters, and paraded through the camp as the cause and justification of war.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Review of the situation—General tendency of the Roman world towards monarchy—Cæsar's policy points to the fusion of Rome and her subjects in one nation under a second Alexander—Cæsar crosses the Rubicon—Pompeius quits Rome for the South of Italy—Cæsar pursues and takes many places—Surrender of Corfinium—Cæsar's clemency—Pompeius carries his army across the Adriatic—Dismay of the senators at his policy—Cæsar reaches Rome and rifles the temple of Saturn—Curio defeated and slain in Africa—Cæsar reduces the province of Spain, and takes Massilia—He is created dictator—He effects salutary fiscal measures, recalls exiles, and then resigns the office—Causes himself to be nominated consul with Servilius, and repairs with legitimate powers to his army at Brundisium.—(B.C. 49.)

As regards the justification of the revolt against Rome which Cæsar was about to perpetrate, it has been said that the right was technically on his side. He had contrived to throw the crime of actual illegality on his opponents; but the situation was one in which it had become impossible for the lawful government to keep the law, and it was the irregular ambition of Cæsar which had indirectly produced the situation. To the real moving causes of the great civil war we must look deeper than to the personal acts of individuals, whatever their authority and their ambition. The fact is patent that everything had been long tending to monarchy at Rome, and that for the last eighty years the decay of ancient ideas, the obliteration of equal laws, and the disorganisation of government

had combined to render such a consummation inevitable. The tribunate of the younger Gracchus, the consulships of Marius and Cinna, the dictatorship of Sulla, the wide and protracted commands of Pompeius and Cæsar, had been in fact no other than temporary autocracies. The nobles were content that the state should be ruled by a succession of extraordinary commissions in the hands of their own chiefs. The people would have been satisfied to merge all their rights of self-government in the paramount authority of a sovereign chosen by themselves. Men of a speculative turn of mind, a large and increasing class, withdrew more and more from the turbid sphere of politics. Atticus, who piqued himself on his shrewd practical sense, professed neutrality on all questions of state, and lived in amity with three generations of public men of every shade of opinion. Cato and his follower Brutus, who strove to mould their political conduct by the precepts of the highest philosophy, only proved that virtue and honour could no longer exist in the atmosphere of the Roman free-state. The republic to which Cicero devoted his faith and love was the republic of antiquity, or rather of his own imagination; nor are indications wanting that even he admitted that liberty is never more amiable than when she yields to the mild authority of a constitutional sovereign. But few men were cautious and temperate as he was; the bold and free-spoken openly proclaimed with Curio, that 'the republic was a vain chimera,' or called it, with Cæsar himself, 'a name devoid of substance or reality.'

There exists, however, a document, purporting to be the address of a contemporary to Cæsar, inviting him to restore the state through a monarchical revolution. The two letters on this theme ascribed to Sallust the historian may be justly regarded as spurious, as far as their authorship is concerned; nevertheless we can hardly doubt that the writer has modelled them on the sentiments attributed to him or to men of his class and character, who fairly despaired of the republic. The views propounded in them may be summed up in a few words. Cæsar is invited to assume the government of the state, as the man who alone can apply a remedy to its disorders. He is entreated not to suffer the mighty empire to fall into impotence, or perish through its own miserable discords. 'Save Rome,' exclaims the orator, 'for if Rome perishes the whole world will perish with her in slaughter and devastation. Vast is the task imposed upon you. The genuine free people is annihilated; there remains only a corrupt populace without unity of sentiment or action. In-

fuse a new element into the mass, introduce numbers of foreign citizens, found colonies and restore cities, crush the factions of tyrants at home, and extend far abroad the roots of the Roman community. Exact military service of all alike, but limit the term of it. Let the magistrates be chosen for their virtues and dignities, not for mere wealth. To entrust the working of this reformed polity to the citizens themselves would be vain. But the impartial eye of a supreme ruler may watch securely over its development, and neither fear nor favour, nor private interest, interfere to clog its operation.' This exposition of the views of intelligent public men was supported by the mass of the middle orders, the men who were working their way to wealth by trade and humble industry. It was sanctioned by many from sheer disgust at the selfish corruption of the ruling powers. Nevertheless the prevailing impression was not unreasonable, that the ascendancy of the nobles, founded upon blood and revolution, would resort again and again to the same means to maintain itself. The tyranny of Sulla was avenged on the second generation. Cæsar's accession to power was anticipated as an era of peace and security, while under the chiefs of the oligarchy the city seemed never safe from proscription and massacre. Even at this moment it was reported that the government had prepared a list of forty senators, and many others of lesser quality, devoted to slaughter.

Great weight accrued, moreover, to Cicero's cause from the favour in which he was generally held by the foreign subjects of the republic. As far as they understood the tendency of the impending revolution towards monarchy, they were well-disposed to lend an impulse to it. To them, for the most part, monarchy was more familiar and palatable than the forms of a commonwealth, which they scarcely comprehended and were not permitted to use. But Cæsar himself was personally beloved by multitudes who had never seen him. The nephew of Marius had carried the traditions of his party further than any of his predecessors. The incorporation of the Italians was not enough for him; he had advanced the Cispadane Gauls to the franchise also; and thus breaking down the barrier between Italy and the provinces, he had effaced the Rubicon, so to speak, from the map of the peninsula. He was evidently preparing to carry the same principle further. The Gauls beyond the Po, and even beyond the Alps, might expect similar favour at his hands. He had secured the independence of certain cities in Greece. He had attached to himself some of the potentates of Asia. He had

lavished vast sums on the decoration of provincial cities both in the East and West. Foreign nations might well begin to imagine that Cæsar was preparing to mould the whole Roman world into a mighty monarchy under equal laws. To be a second Alexander had been the dream of many kings and conquerors. The hour and the man might seem to have at last arrived for its realisation.

The tribunes had quitted the city on the night of January 6. The consuls thereupon left Rome and repaired to the quarters of Pompeius, thus virtually resigning their authority to him. U.C. 705. Orders were issued for the levy of fresh troops; but the B.C. 49. legions in Spain were left as a check upon Cæsar in his rear. The great governments of the empire were then allotted among the chiefs of the party, but all these arrangements were made with reckless disregard of legitimate forms; arms and money were collected by forced contributions, and the temples of the Italian towns rifled of their treasures.

On the evening of the 7th couriers left Rome for Cæsar's camp with an account of these tumultuary proceedings. Cæsar was already advised of the attitude his enemies were about to assume. His own plans had been laid in anticipation of them. One legion only was with him at Ravenna; to these he opened his griefs, and declared that he would appeal at once to arms. On the 15th he sent forward some cohorts to the Rubicon, the frontier of his province, about twenty miles distant. The same evening he followed them privately in person, and effected the passage with a small detachment. From Ariminum, a few miles beyond the stream, he despatched orders for the movement of his troops; one legion reached him in a fortnight, and a second within a month. Three legions he stationed at Narbo, to watch the Pompeian forces in Spain, while the remainder of his troops were concentrated more at leisure in the south of Gaul, to support either the right or the left wing of his armaments. For the moment, however, the invading force was hardly 6,000 strong, while his opponents had three times that number actually in hand, whose vigorous attack it would hardly have been possible to resist. But as soon as the news reached Rome that the Rubicon had actually been passed Pompeius himself seemed to be seized with the same consternation which reigned in the ranks of his adherents. Neither the government nor their chief had expected so bold a movement. Pompeius marched straight through the southern gate of the city, and called upon all good citizens to follow him. In a few hours the Appian Way was

crowded with a motley multitude, less incensed perhaps against the man from whom they fled than him who had neglected every precaution for their defence, and exposed them to an onslaught, as they wildly imagined, of Gaulish barbarians.

Meanwhile there was some pretence at negotiation; but Pompeius, encouraged by the sudden defection of Cæsar's best officer, Labienus, insisted that the rebel should lay down his arms, while Cæsar no less peremptorily demanded that if one abdicated his command the other should do likewise. Cæsar advanced; Arretium, Iguvium, and Auximum promptly received him. The road to Rome lay open to him; but when he heard that his adversaries were crossing from Capua to the northern coast, he turned without hesitation to the left, traversed Picenum, took Cingulum and Asculum, and threw himself upon the strong central position of Corfinium, where Pompeius had left a detachment to encounter him. Domitius, one of the boldest of the party, had insisted that this place at least should not be abandoned, and from thence he called upon his fleeing general to bring up his whole force to his support; but Pompeius coldly refused, and soon left the fortress far behind him. Domitius prepared to stand a siege, but his courage was of no avail. No sooner did Cæsar appear before the walls than the soldiers of the Senate delivered the place, with their commander, into his hands. Cæsar was struck with this signal instance of the power of his name and character. Clement by temper, he clearly saw the political advantage of sparing his captive. He granted Domitius his life and even his freedom—the first instance, perhaps, of such magnanimity in the history of the Roman civil wars. To the Gauls, indeed, and to other enemies of Rome, Cæsar had shown as much ruthless barbarity as any of his countrymen; but he deserves not the less all the credit which the Romans so liberally ascribed to him for his singular forbearance, here and elsewhere, towards his fellow-citizens.

The officers taken in Corfinium might refuse to share in the victor's enterprise, but the men joined his standard with alacrity, and his slender forces soon swelled to formidable numbers. As he advanced the feeling of the country was pronounced decidedly in his favour, while the fierce proclamations of Pompeius, declaring that he would treat even neutrals as enemies, excited nothing but dismay or disgust. Cicero, who was deeply mortified at his chief's desertion of Rome, murmured with bitter indignation at these impolitic menaces. Pompeius charged him to abandon Capua, where

he had been entrusted with a command, and join him in Apulia; but the road was no longer open. From Luceria, not waiting even for the result of the defence of Corfinium, Pompeius led the consuls and magistrates to the port of Brundisium. There he had already collected a number of transports; and from thence he immediately despatched several legions to Epirus. The only duty of a general he performed was to remain himself behind and accompany the last of his divisions. Cæsar, hastening from Corfinium, was already at the gates; but he was destitute of ships, and the sea was open to the Pompeian vessels which were returning to bear away the remnant of the army. He made a vigorous attempt to throw a mole across the mouth of the harbour, but he was baffled in this operation, and Pompeius sailed hastily away. A slight skirmish ensued, but the first blood in the civil war was shed to little purpose.

Cæsar had made himself master of Italy in sixty days. Never, perhaps, was so great a conquest effected so rapidly, or in the face of assailants apparently so formidable. Every step he advanced was a surprise to his enemies; yet at each step they had predicted more confidently his approaching discomfiture. Meanwhile their chief was compelling them to follow his rapid and ignominious retreat. In vain did the haughty nobles clamour to be led against the invader; in vain did they heap reproaches upon their chosen champion. He was not to be diverted from his plans, whatever they might be; and he would make no disclosure of them. At last, as he stepped on board his vessel at Brundisium, the love of home and country prevailed with many over every other feeling, and again the Appian Way was crowded with knights and senators; but this time their faces were turned towards the city. Many of them belonged, no doubt, to the class of indolent voluptuaries who could not prevail on themselves to sacrifice their selfish pleasures; but many also were better citizens, to whom the conduct of their leader foreboded some latent treachery. They hated him for his arrogance, and shuddered at the words which were often in his mouth: 'Sulla could do this, why should not I?' They left it to the needy spendthrifts and reckless adventurers of their party to cling still to his fortunes, and gloat over their visions of an abolition of debts and confiscation of properties upon their return. No victory of Cæsar seemed now so much to be dreaded as a victory of Pompeius.

It may be presumed that this great captain's flight was not a mere panic, but that he had a definite plan and purpose in it. He had, we may presume, no intention of sharing his victory with the

great men of his party, or restoring to their ivory chairs the old chiefs of the aristocracy. There was now little disguise as to his designs, no doubt as to the attempt he would make to obliterate the traces of ancient liberty. He would call upon the servile nations of the East to trample on the free citizens of Western Europe. Some, indeed, of the nobles, such as Cato, might still think to impose a check upon him by their presence in his camp; but many even of the noblest among them were already corrupted by the hope of revolution. War against Italy, war against Rome, was the open cry of the most daring and profligate. 'We will starve the city into submission; we will not leave one tile upon a roof throughout the country,' was echoed by Pompeius himself. Such was the ominous language which resounded in the Senatorial camp as soon as it was pitched in Epirus, and the opposite shores assumed the character of a foreign and hostile strand. The consuls listened to it without a murmur, for it was their own champion who held it or allowed it. 'He left the city,' says Cicero, 'not because he could not defend it; and Italy, not as driven out of it; but this was his design from the first, to move every land and sea, to call to arms the kings of the barbarians, to lead savage nations into Italy not as captives but as conquerors. He is determined to reign like Sulla, as a king over his subjects; and many there are who applaud this atrocious design.'

The flight of the consuls and the Senate left Cæsar in possession of the centre of his enemy's position. He might decide at his leisure on which wing of their army he should first concentrate his forces. Meanwhile the occupation of Italy and Rome, which opened its gates to receive him, gave him command of all the material and moral resources he required. Cicero, whom he met in Campania, declined to follow him; and his scruples Cæsar could afford to respect. To the citizens he explained the substantial justice of his claims, which the consuls had deserted their post rather than concede; but it was of more importance to assure them that, in spite of that desertion, they had no slaughter nor pillage to fear from him. He entered the city unattended; and while he engaged to give 2,000 sesterces to each of his soldiers, and 300 to every citizen, he made no requisitions to supply himself with the sums he needed, but demanded only the treasure hoarded in the temple of Saturn, beneath the Capitol. It was popularly believed that the gold here accumulated was the actual ransom of the city which the Romans had paid to Brennus, and Camillus had recovered from him. A curse had been denounced against the sacrilegious

hand which should remove it for any purpose but to repel a Gallic invasion. The tribune Metellus forbade it to be seized, but Cæsar pushed him aside: 'The fear of a Gallic invasion,' he said, 'is for ever at an end. I have subdued the Gauls.'

From this time affairs at Rome resumed their usual course, except that the civil government having been withdrawn, the city was necessarily placed for a time under military control. But one day's interruption of the usual supplies would have thrown the vast population into confusion, and the granaries of the city, Sardinia, Sicily, and Africa, were all held by Pompeian lieutenants. Cæsar's care was immediately directed to the recovery of these provinces. The legion which he sent to Sardinia was received by the inhabitants with open arms. Cato abandoned Sicily as soon as Curio appeared before it. Africa still remained unconquered, and thither Curio transported the troops under his command. Here, however, the Pompeians held out, and, supported by the Numidian chieftain Juba, engaged their assailant upon his landing, and speedily overpowered him. Curio was slain, his troops were carried hastily back to Italy, and Africa remained Pompeian.

Cæsar had left the city under the control of his lieutenant Æmilius Lepidus, and gave the command in Italy to Antonius, while he set out himself for Spain. 'I go,' he said, 'to engage an army without a general: I shall return to attack a general without an army.' The three Iberian provinces were governed by Varro, Afranius, and Petreius. The first was a civilian and a scholar, without experience of arms or interest in the cause he served; the second was a weak profligate; the third alone a veteran of courage and loyalty, though destitute of the higher qualities of a general. Between them there was little concert. But Cæsar was detained on his march by the defection of Massilia, which, already well-inclined to the side of the nobles by whom the province had been organised and long administered, was now secured to them by the energy of Domitius, who had escaped from Italy and thrown himself into it. To save delay Cæsar left a large portion of his forces to blockade this place, and boldly entered Spain, where only three legions had preceded him. Afranius and Petreius confronted these forces at Ilerda. Cæsar was in want of money, and he soon found himself straitened for provisions. His position between the waters of the Segre and the Cinga was threatened by a sudden flood, which swept away his bridges. The enemy exulted in the certainty of his destruction; but by the use of light coracles, such

as he had seen in Britain, he maintained his communications; and when he brought the two armies once more face to face, a parley ensued, and the Pompeian forces with little hesitation passed over to his side. Such was the fame of Cæsar's exploits, and such his reputation for generosity, throughout the ranks of the Roman soldiery.

When Spain was thus speedily conquered Cæsar departed in all haste for Massilia, where the inhabitants, confined to their walls by two defeats at sea, were already reduced to extremity. They surrendered to him, and delivered up their arms, their vessels, and their public treasure, in anticipation of his accustomed clemency. Domitius, however, escaped once more and rejoined his associates in Epirus. Massilia was allowed to retain her independence, but her disasters seemed to shatter the foundations of her prosperity, and she never recovered her former eminence as an emporium of ancient commerce. The western provinces of the empire were now completely Cæsarian. Thus secure in his rear, the conqueror could direct his undivided forces against the only general who could venture to measure himself with him, and from that general he had just wrested the principal strength of his army.

Cæsar was still at Massilia when he learnt that the people of Rome had proclaimed him dictator. Many of the prescribed formalities had been omitted, but the strictness of legal forms had been little observed on many recent occasions. What did it matter, however, that the dictator was created in this instance by the prætor and not by the consul, with the acclamations of the people and not by the suffrage of the Senate? It was better at least that Cæsar should rule under a known historical title than with none at all, and there was no possibility of investing him with any title in the regular form. The people, who saw the hateful rule of the dictator wielded at last by a champion of their own, rejoiced in the master they had chosen, and forgot for the moment that Cæsar ruled by the army, and not by themselves. Cæsar himself did not forget it, neither did his soldiers. The ninth legion mutinied at Placentia, and demanded the rewards he had promised them at Brundisium. But he suppressed the revolt with firmness and severity. His position was once more secure.

It was for fiscal measures that the creation of a dictator was immediately demanded at this crisis. When, in the middle of the seventh century of the city, the futile laws against usury had been allowed to fall into disuse, a consul was found to carry a sweeping

measure for the reduction of all debts by three-fourths. The money-lenders, who demanded interest from twelve to forty per cent., exclaimed loudly against this confiscation of their property; but it was clearly impossible to maintain the powers of government unless such exorbitant usury was curtailed from time to time by arbitrary expedients. Nor did the class of money-lenders suffer permanently from this check to their gains. The spirit of luxury and speculation which grew with the wealth and greatness of the empire gave a fresh impulse to their transactions. Large classes of citizens became bowed to the ground under the burden of their obligations; the conspiracy of Catilina, conducted by political adventurers, had been mainly supported by the exigencies of these impoverished debtors. Among the various interests evoked in favour of Cæsar's ambitious schemes, none were more attached to him than those of the debtors and repudiators. His hereditary connexion with the party opposed to the noblest and wealthiest classes, his reputed familiarity with Catilina, his own early embarrassments and consequent laxity of principles, all pointed him out as the destined leader of a great fiscal revolution. But the anticipations thus formed of him were deceived. Assailed by clamorous importunity, the dictator, absolute as he was, refused to yield to the cry for confiscation. He appointed arbiters for the valuation of debtors' property, and insisted on its sale; all he required of the creditors was that they would forego their claims for excessive interest. He seems further to have resorted to the old expedient of the tribunes, in distributing grants of land among the bankrupts, and relieving the state from the dangers of a needy aristocracy.

An ample largess of corn added to the general contentment. But many were the claimants on Cæsar's generosity. All who had deemed themselves aggrieved by the late government looked to him for redress. Of the exiles whom Pompeius had condemned in the vigorous exercise of his last consulship several offered him their services, and prayed for recall. Of this class Milo alone, and Antonius, the consul who had taken the field against Catilina, were excepted from the amnesty. Cæsar held the dictatorship only eleven days, and did not even appoint a master of the horse. Before resigning it he presided at the comitia of the tribes, and caused himself to be nominated consul together with Servilius Isauricus. The other magistracies were conferred upon his steadfast adherents with every due formality, and before issuing from Rome to join his legions at Brundisium he declared war against the public enemy

who was allying himself with foreign powers, at the *Latin feriæ*, on the Alban mount. Nothing was now wanting to the regularity of his government: neither the decrees of the Senate, for he had assembled more than half that body at Rome, nor the election of the people, the sanction of the armies, and the taking of the auspices on the spot appointed by custom and religion. Cæsar, as proconsul, was a rebel from the moment he quitted his province; but as soon as he became consul legitimately installed the right in the eyes of the Romans passed at once to his side, while his adversaries were straightway transformed into enemies and traitors. This they seemed themselves in some sort to acknowledge; for although there were as many as two hundred senators in the camp of Pompeius, they dared not enact a law, nor hold an election, nor confer an imperium. The representative of the people had become the guardian of usage and public order, while the champion of the oligarchy derived his arbitrary power from the passions of a turbulent camp. Such was the position the rival parties might now seem to assume; but the character of the antagonists themselves imparted to it the character of personal defiance. Pompeius and Cæsar represented to the citizens the one the venerable oak, the other the divine thunderbolt, that shatters and destroys it

CHAPTER XLV.

Review of the forces pitted against each other—Cæsar crosses into Epirus and blockades Pompeius in his camp at Petra—Pompeius makes a successful sally—Cæsar withdraws from the coast, and the two armies meet at Pharsalia, in Thessaly—Cæsar's great victory—Flight of Pompeius—He seeks an asylum at the court of Ptolemæus, king of Egypt—His assassination—Cæsar follows in pursuit, and reaches Alexandria from Syria, and takes the part of Cleopatra against Ptolemæus—The Alexandrine war—Cæsar in great peril, finally successful—Death of Ptolemæus—Cæsar engages in war with Pharnaces—His easy victory—State of affairs in the city—Cæsar a second and a third time dictator—His campaign in Africa—Battle of Thapsus; discomfiture of the republicans, and suicide of Cato.—(B.C. 48-46.)

POMPEIUS, relying on the support of the Eastern potentates, who still regarded him as the greatest captain and statesman in the world, had appointed his allies to meet at Thessalonica. Deiotarus and Dorilaus, princes of Galatia; Rhascuporis and Sadales of Thrace, Tarcondimotus of Cilicia, Ariobarzanes of Cappadocia, Antiochus of

Commagene, were among the most conspicuous chiefs who flocked to his standard, and brought with them the horsemen, the bowmen, the slingers, and all the various armaments of the East. These were only the auxiliaries; his main body consisted of five Roman legions which he had carried over from Italy, together with four others which had been summoned from the eastern provinces, while C. Metellus Scipio was expected to bring two more from his distant government in Syria. Nine complete legions may have amounted to 45,000 men; the cavalry and auxiliaries may have swelled this number to 100,000, while the motley forces of the allies defied all calculation. But these swarms were more than could be maintained together, and even of the legionaries the greater number were raw levies, which required much time and care in training. Meantime the plans of their commander were even more disconcerted by the rival pretensions of his lieutenants, both Roman and barbarian. Pompeius found himself thwarted especially by the chiefs of the Senate who surrounded him. The Lentuli and Marcelli, the Domitii and Metelli, the renegade Labienus, the vanquished Afranius, Cato also and Cicero, who had recently arrived at the camp, formed with many others a council of war, which filled the general's tent with discord, and sought, not always in vain, to sway his policy and control his judgment. It was to the coast of Epirus that all these forces and their leaders converged, and there that Pompeius made his preparations and reviewed his plans during the nine months that followed his escape from Italy.

Cæsar could not boast among his auxiliaries so many nations or so many kings. But besides the legion *Alauda* and other levies from Gaul and Spain, from the Cisalpine, and from Italy itself, he had enlisted some squadrons of German horse, whose courage he had proved on many fields. He trusted in the rapidity of his movements, and did not care to encumber himself with numbers. His legionaries were all veterans, inured to toil and hunger, to heat and cold, and every man among them was himself a host. The officers were entirely devoted to their imperator. They trusted in one mind, and they fought as it were with a single arm. Cæsar arrived at Brundisium at the end of the year 49, and prepared to embark seven legions, amounting however to no more than 15,000 infantry and 600 cavalry, on board the vessels collected during his absence. Pompeius had hitherto possessed the command of the sea, which he watched with a fleet of 500 galleys; but Bibulus, who

was in charge of it, was indolent and careless, and was reposing through the winter season while Cæsar threw his transports boldly across the Adriatic with the first division of his forces. The vessels, however, which were sent back to fetch his remaining battalions, were intercepted on their way to the Italian coast and many of them destroyed, and Cæsar was forced to confine himself to trifling operations, evading rather than encountering the enemy whose position he had menaced, until M. Antonius could equip a second convoy and bring over the legions which were still lacking to him. It is said that in this emergency he ventured himself to attempt the passage in the face of a violent tempest, reassuring his trembling pilot with the cry: 'Fear not; you carry Cæsar and his fortunes.' But, whatever brave words he may have used, he returned to the coast of Epirus without effecting his purpose.

When Antonius succeeded at last in crossing he was carried by the winds a hundred miles from the point where his chief was stationed, and Pompeius, who lay between, might easily, it should seem, have overpowered him. But Pompeius was unaccountably tardy and remiss; Cæsar effected a junction with his lieutenant, and speedily assumed active operations. He was enabled to throw himself between Pompeius and his magazines at Dyrrhachium, and confined him to the position he had taken on the promontory of Petra, beneath which there was a good anchorage. The command of the sea secured his supplies, and Pompeius continued to train and exercise his new soldiers, while his adversary with inferior numbers ventured to draw lines of circumvallation round him. As a military measure this manœuvre was unavailing; but Cæsar might calculate on the moral effect of the duel thus presented to the world. Doubtless the sight of the great Pompeius blockaded by his daring assailant gave an impetus to the favour in which Cæsar's cause began to be held even in the countries which had least personal experience of his abilities and resources. Throughout Greece and Macedonia his partisans increased in numbers and courage; he received assurances of support, and could now remove, if required, the basis of his operations to the very ground which Pompeius had chosen for the centre of his own operations. The immediate success of the blockade before Petra was not material to him. He continued, however, to press it vigorously, and by cutting off the streams which ran into the enclosure reduced the enemy to great straits for water. Pompeius, it seems, dared not lead his men against the besiegers in front of him, but with the aid of his numerous vessels

he landed a large force at their rear, and succeeded in throwing them into confusion. The rout, indeed, was so signal that he apprehended a feint, and recalled his men from the pursuit in which Cæsar might have been destroyed altogether. It must be allowed that, in this their first meeting, the elder general both out-manceuvred and out-fought the younger.

One month earlier the defeat of Cæsar would have been ruinous to him, for he had then secured no friends to favour his retreat, and no second field for the development of his resources. He could now retire from the seaboard into Macedonia and Thessaly, combine his detachments, and invite the chances of a campaign in the open country. Meanwhile Afranius and others urged Pompeius to cross over into Italy, and recover the capital of the empire. The effect of such a movement upon the fortunes of his party could not fail to be enormous. Pompeius, on his part, would still have shrunk from measuring himself with his adversary in the field, and his refusal to adopt this plan was assuredly the blindest fatuity. But Scipio, with the legions of Asia, lay to the eastward, and the conqueror of Mithridates still persisted in looking to the East as the appropriate basis of his resources. Accordingly, on breaking up from Petra he directed his forces on Macedonia, though too late to overtake his rival, who had already penetrated into Thessaly, and occupied the great valley of the Peneus.

The nobles in the Senatorial camp amused themselves with quarrelling about the expected spoils of the war, which they hoped soon to terminate with a triumphant victory. Cato was so shocked at their truculent threats, that he sought a command which should detain him on the coast of Epirus; and Cicero, who had repaired once more to the side of Pompeius, now pleaded ill-health, and remained behind also. At length, impelled by the taunts of his sanguine followers, Pompeius moved southward from Larissa, in quest of the Cæsarians, who were posted on the bank of the Enipeus. The two armies entrenched themselves on the plain, with an interval of four miles between them, and the eminence on which stood Pharsalus, the modern Fersala, as the most conspicuous object in the vicinity, gave a name to the battle which ensued. But Pompeius long refused to meet the enemy, nor could his officers bring him into the field till Cæsar threatened a flank movement which would have cut off his communications. Yet his army boasted a legionary force of full 40,000 men, with 7,000 horses, supported by a countless host of foreign auxiliaries; while Cæsar had but 22,000

well-trained infantry, with 1,000 cavalry, and a few irregular battalions.

Shortly before noon on August 9 (= June 6 of the Julian calendar) the Pompeians descended from their camp and ranged themselves in the plain, having a stream, which appears to ^{v.c. 706.} have been the Enipeus, on their right. ^{B.C. 48.} Cæsar hastened to the encounter. Extending his cavalry obliquely on his right, to prevent his being outflanked on the only open side, for his left was protected by the stream, he ordered his first line to charge with its usual impetuosity. The Pompeians were directed to await the onset where they stood, that the assailants might be exhausted by the increased space they would have to traverse. But the Cæsarians halted to take breath, and made their last rush with recovered vigour. Meanwhile the Pompeian cavalry had charged in their turn. The gallant German horse, though few in number, supported by the picked men who fought on foot among them, received the shock with fortitude, and only retreated slowly before it, till they found themselves relieved by a reserve of six cohorts appointed for that service. The knights and senators of the Pompeian cavalry were equipped in complete armour, and the Cæsarians were expressly ordered to waste no blows on their helmets and cuirasses, but to strike home at their faces. Thus assailed they soon broke their ranks, and rolled back upon their own lines, till they gained the open space behind. The Pompeian infantry were still holding their ground when this success enabled Cæsar to bring up his reserve and charge them both in front and flank. At the commencement of the day he had directed his men to aim at the Romans opposed to them, and disregard the allies, whose slaughter would count little towards deciding the event. But as soon as fortune decided in his favour he commanded them to spare the blood of citizens and devote themselves to the destruction of the foreigners. Among these almost unresisting multitudes great slaughter was effected. Pompeius had already abandoned the field and withdrawn to his camp. The hasty preparations he made for defending himself there were baffled by the precipitate flight of his routed battalions, and it was not till he found himself left almost alone within his lines that he mounted his horse and galloped off through the decuman, or hinder gate, in the direction of Larissa.

The battle of Pharsalia, as the most famous at least in Roman history, has deserved a more particular account than others, and in describing it we have the special advantage of the narrative of the

general himself who won it. Yet, singular enough, the account in Cæsar's 'Commentaries' does not allow us to identify the actual spot. It should be remarked that Cæsar makes no mention of Pharsalus or Pharsalia at all, and it seems impossible to assign the locality to the plain south of the Enipeus, where that village stands. Pompeius came from Larissa, and to Larissa he returned, and the only reasonable solution of the problem seems to be, however contrary to that generally accepted, that the armies were posted north of the stream, the Pompeians with their right, the Cæsarians with their left, wing resting upon it. Pharsalus in either case constituted the most prominent feature in the plain, and might well be selected on that account to give a name to the battle.

The remnant of the Pompeian host was scattered in various directions. No reserve had been provided on the field, nor had any place been assigned for rallying in case of disaster. The fleet was far distant, and dispersed in petty enterprises, yet the resources which remained to so great a party even after one complete defeat, in which the rout had been more signal than the amount of slaughter, were manifold and abundant. But Pompeius lost all courage and judgment. He fled through Larissa, declining the shelter of its walls, and penetrating the defiles of Tempe gained the Thessalian coast at the mouth of the Peneus. Here he was taken on board a merchant-vessel, with three or four of his officers, and made direct for Lesbos, whither he had removed his wife Cornelia. Running from thence, along the coast of Asia, he picked up a few more of his adherents, and held a council as to the means to be adopted for his further safety. He proposed, it is said, to demand an asylum in Parthia, but in this he was overruled. His advisers represented Ptolemæus, the child-king of Egypt, as a potentate who at least owed gratitude to the Senate, whose wealth was immense, and whose position was inaccessible to an enemy destitute of a fleet. In Egypt Pompeius, it was urged, might summon his friends around him, and prepare at leisure for another struggle.

The fugitive arrived at Pelusium with about 2,000 men. By the will of the late king his daughter Cleopatra was destined to wed her brother Ptolemæus, then a mere stripling, and to reign conjointly with him under the guardianship of a council of state. But Cleopatra had been expelled by a court intrigue, and the country was ruled in the young king's name by the chamberlain Pothinus, the general Achilles, and the preceptor Theodotus. Cleopatra threatened to invade the realm and recover her rights. The king's

forces were drawn up on the eastern frontier to oppose her, and the band of Pompeius, slender as it was, might have secured the victory to either party. The claims of the Roman suppliant were discussed in the royal councils, and his dangerous alliance rejected. It was necessary, however, to prevent his throwing his power into the opposite ranks. Accordingly the adverse decision was concealed, and the victim inveigled alone into a vessel sent to bear him, as was pretended, into the royal presence. Pompeius fell blindly into the snare. When seated in the boat, Septimius, a Roman centurion, first struck him from behind, and he was speedily dispatched by Achilles himself. His head was cut off and carried on shore, the trunk cast out into the surf, whence it was shortly washed up on the beach. A freedman of the murdered chief named Philippus wrapped in his cloak the mutilated corpse, and consumed it on a rude pyre formed from the wreck of a fishing-boat. He laid his remains in the sand, and placed over them a stone, on which he had traced the name of 'Magnus' with a blackened brand. Thus perished the great Pompeius at the close of his fifty-eighth year, and such were the sorry honours paid to the last hero of the commonwealth—to him who had gained three triumphs over the three continents of the ancient world, had been thrice consul, and once without a colleague, whose proconsulate had extended over the East and the West alternately, who might have demanded the dictatorship, and perhaps might have seized the empire.

The victor of Pharsalia never failed to improve his successes by promptness and decision. He now left one detachment to watch Cato in Illyricum, and charged another to complete the reduction of his adversaries in Greece. Attended only by a squadron of horse, and followed by a single legion, he pushed forwards in pursuit of Pompeius, taking the route of the Hellespont, Asia Minor, and Syria, the sea being closed against him. Cassius, who might have intercepted him in the straits, was awed or fascinated into submission, and a few days after the death of Pompeius, Cæsar reached Alexandria from the Syrian coast with thirty-five vessels and 4,000 men. The head of his enemy was presented to him, but he turned away from it with horror, and ordered the remains to be honourably interred. The king's advisers were mortified and alarmed. When their visitor entered the capital with the ensigns of a Roman consul, at the head of an army, the people regarded it as an affront, and the royal forces, a motley collection of Greeks, Italians, and Asiatics, the hired defenders of an unpopular throne, were excited

to quarrel with the Cæsarians, and bloody encounters took place between them. Cæsar, it seems, was pressed for money, and urged the payment of sums due to him from Ptolemæus. Pothinus evaded the demand, and sought to gain time to overpower the intruder. Cæsar, however, got possession of the king's person, and kept him a prisoner in his own palace. At the same time he allowed Cleopatra to urge her claims in person. She entered his residence by night, and paid a woman's price to secure his favour. Cæsar openly avowed himself her lover and champion, and required Ptolemæus to share his power with her. But the young king's advisers were specially hateful to the queen. They trembled for their lives. Pothinus, indeed, was seized and put to death, but Achilles escaped to the soldiers and called them to arms. The populace rose with them, and shut up Cæsar in a quarter of the city where he was cut off from water by damming up the canals which supplied it from the Nile. To keep open the sea for retreat if necessary Cæsar seized and fired the Egyptian fleet, and the conflagration reaching the shore involved in flames the great library of the Museum. Four hundred thousand volumes are said to have perished.

The position, however, of the foreigner in the midst of an armed and turbulent population became more and more precarious. Cæsar was reduced to the use of the brackish water drawn from pits he sunk in the sea-sand while he awaited succours from Syria. He was repulsed in an attempt to make himself master of the isle of Pharos, which commanded the harbour, and only escaped by swimming, bearing, as said the legend, his 'Commentaries' in one hand. Anxious now to make an arrangement and terminate the struggle, he restored Ptolemæus to his subjects; but the reinforcements which presently arrived on the frontier took Pelusium, crossed the Nile, and enabled him to issue forth from his cantonments and engage the royal army. Ptolemæus perished in the river. The spirit of the Egyptians was broken, and they accepted Cleopatra for their queen. She cemented her throne by marriage with another brother still younger than her former consort, and by giving up her sister Arsinoë, who had inspired the revolt against her, to be carried captive to Rome.

Cæsar had fixed his eyes on the treasures of Alexandria to supply his needs; for he still abstained from plunder and confiscation within the limits of the empire. It was this necessity of recruiting his finances, we may believe, far more than the vaunted fascinations of the 'Serpent of the Nile' that engaged him to remain

three months longer in the country. He had acquired a footing in the wealthiest kingdom in the world; as long as the remnant of the Pompeians were still scattered and unprepared, and seeking on their side also the means of maintaining their armies, he lost little by postponing operations against them. Indeed, he now found leisure for a campaign against Pharnaces, the son of Mithridates, who had profited by the confusion of the republic to attack his neighbours Deiotarus and Ariobarzanes. These princes sought the succour of Cæsar's lieutenant Calvinus; and though they had just fought on the side of Pompeius, he received instructions to support them, as serviceable allies of Rome. Calvinus, however, was routed and Pharnaces overran Asia Minor, and threatened to expel the Roman settlers. Cæsar quitted Alexandria in April, 707, landed at Tarsus, traversed Cilicia and Cappadocia, and reached the barbarian host at Zela, in Pontus. A battle ensued; Pharnaces fell, and in five days the war was finished. 'I came, I saw, I conquered,' was the boastful phrase in which, according to the story, the victor announced it to the Senate. Pompeius had taken years to subdue Mithridates.

Cæsar's protracted absence from the capital strongly marked the confidence he felt in the stability of his arrangements there. Notwithstanding some symptoms of transient and partial disaffection, and a rash movement of Milo against him among the gladiators and outlaws of Campania, the mass of the citizens was firmly attached to him, and to this result the ferocious threats of the Pompeians had no doubt contributed. We may imagine with what anxiety the knights and senators at Rome had awaited the event of the campaign in Epirus; nor were they altogether relieved by the report of the victory at Pharsalia. For these welcome news were accompanied with the assurance that the victor was plunging still further into the distant East, while his enemies were once more gathering in his rear. Nevertheless his adherents insisted on removing the statues of Pompeius and Sulla from the forum, and his secret enemies were controlled by spies, and compelled to join in the public demonstrations of satisfaction. None could distrust the genius and fortune of the irresistible conqueror. The courtiers and flatterers multiplied in the Senate-house and the forum, and vied with one another in suggesting new honours for his gratification. Decrees were issued investing

U.C. 706. him with unbounded authority over the lives and fortunes

B.C. 48. of the vanquished. He was armed with full powers for suppressing the republican party, which was again making head in Africa. In October, 48, Cæsar was created dictator for the second

time, and the powers of the tribunate were decreed him for the term of his life. He appointed M. Antonius his master of the horse and commandant in the city. Brave, but violent and dissolute, Antonius possessed neither the vigour nor the prudence which the situation required. The sinister rumours which began now to circulate of Cæsar's peril at Alexandria rendered his conduct uncertain; he hesitated to put down with a firm hand the disturbers whom his master's death might render more powerful than himself. The son-in-law of Cicero, Cornelius Dolabella, overwhelmed with debt, had followed the example of Clodius in getting himself adopted by a plebeian, and had thus acquired the tribuneship. In this position he had recommended himself to the worst of the citizens, by urging the abolition of debts. One of his colleagues resisted, and both betook themselves to violence. For some time Antonius looked on, as if uncertain which party to espouse; but a private affront from Dolabella, who had intrigued with his wife, roused his passion; he attacked the turbulent mob with arms, and filled the streets with slaughter. It was well that the dictator reappeared in person in September, 47.

U.C. 707.
B.C. 47.

Cæsar's return was marked by no proscriptions. He confiscated the estates of those only who still bore arms against him, and with them those of Pompeius himself, whose sons were in the hostile camp. The dictator remained only three months in Rome, restraining his own adherents, and Antonius among them, with a firm hand, while he laboured at the reconstruction of the government. Two consuls were appointed for the remaining three months of the current year, and for the next ensuing Cæsar nominated himself for the third time, together with Lepidus. He also caused himself to be again created dictator. His partisans he loaded with offices and honours, and sated the populace with largesses. The soldiers demanded the fulfilment of repeated promises. Those of his own favourite tenth legion broke out in open revolt, and hurried from Campania to Rome to extort their claims. Cæsar mustered them in the Campus, approached them unattended, and invited them to declare their grievances. At the sight of their redoubted leader their murmurs died away; they could only ask for their discharge. 'I discharge you, *citizens* (quirites),' replied the imperator, and they cowered at the rebuke, abashed and humiliated. This simple incident is a key to the history of the times. The application of the title of *citizen*, and the effect it produced, show how purely military was the basis of Cæsar's power, and how well

he knew it. This was the point at which every party leader in turn had tried for years to arrive, and Cæsar had at last succeeded.

The sedition was suppressed, and Cæsar now departed to crush the remnant of his enemies in Africa. The defeated republicans had been scattered in various directions, but the largest division of the fugitives had made its way to Dyrrhachium, and there deliberated on its further movements. Cato, to whom the command was offered, waived it in favour of Cicero, as his superior in rank; but the orator declined to entangle himself further in a hopeless struggle, and departed mournfully for Italy. Shortly afterwards Scipio assumed the command of the main body, and carried it over to Utica, in the province of Africa. Cato, at the head of another division, skirted the coasts of Greece and Asia, and picked up some scattered adherents of the cause. He was following in the track of Pompeius; but when the news of his chief's assassination reached him, he landed on the shore of Libya, and demanded admission into Cyrene. From thence, he coasted westward as far as the Lesser Syrtis, and then plunged with his little army into the desert. The seven days' march through this inhospitable region, torrid with heat and infested with serpents, was extolled by the Roman writers as one of the greatest exploits of their legionaries. It is difficult, indeed, to understand the exact object with which it was encountered; but it is well to record and to signalise it as an enduring monument to the fame of the indomitable Cato.

The arrival of Cato at the head-quarters of the republicans was quickly followed by that of Cnæus, the eldest son of Pompeius, and in the course of the year 47 the remains of the great host of Pharsalia were assembled, with many reinforcements, under the auspices of Scipio. These forces amounted to ten complete legions; and Juba, who could bring 120 elephants and innumerable squadrons of light cavalry into the field, had promised his assistance. The officers began to boast of their future triumphs as loudly as before their recent disasters. As before, the time-servers in the capital were shaken and perplexed. But this vast army had been compelled to act on the defensive and await the attack of the enemy, probably from the want of money and supplies. Its chiefs were not unaffected by personal jealousies. Scipio and Varus contended for the command, the one as foremost in dignity, the other as actual proconsul of the province; while Juba, conscious of his own importance to the cause, pretended to lord it over both. Cato alone continued still to act with his usual simplicity of purpose and

patriotic devotion. His selfish associates contrived to remove him from their counsels by charging him with the defence of Utica, while they shifted their own quarters to Adrumetum. U.C. 708.
 Early in the year 46 the enemy at last appeared off the B.C. 46. coast, and boldly summoned them to surrender to 'Cæsar the emperor.' 'There is no emperor here but Scipio,' they replied, and inflicted death on his envoy as a deserter. But Cæsar soon effected his landing at Leptis, and maintained himself in a fortified position with five legions till he had formed alliances among the Mauretanians, and procured a diversion of the Numidians. He then pushed on, offering battle to Scipio, who refused to meet him till the return of Juba, whose assistance he purchased by submitting to the grossest indignities. At length on April 4 the armies encountered on the field of Thapsus. The eagerness of the Cæsarians, and especially of the tenth legion, overcame the prudent tactics of their commander, and when they rushed unbidden upon the enemy Cæsar at once gave the word, 'Good luck!' and galloping forwards put himself at their head. The combat was speedily decided. The Numidian elephants were thrown into confusion, and trampled upon the ranks they were placed to cover. The native cavalry were the next to turn and flee. Scipio's own legions made little resistance; their officers fled, and the men themselves were routed and massacred with great slaughter. Scipio escaped from the field by sea, but was intercepted and slain. Juba and Petreus fled together; but finding their retreat cut off, engaged each other in mortal combat; when the first fell, the other threw himself on his own sword.

Cato convened his officers at Utica, explained to them his means of defence, and allowed them to choose between resistance and flight or capitulation. The knights and senators would have defended their position, but the inhabitants insisted upon surrender. When it was known that Cæsar was approaching Cato caused all the gates to be closed except that which opened on the shore, and urged all that would to betake themselves to the ships. He dismissed his associates, plainly intimating that for himself he would not quit his post. With his son and a few devoted friends who refused to leave him he sat down to supper, and discoursed with more than his usual fervour on the highest themes of his philosophy, especially insisting that the good man alone is free, and all the bad are slaves. This done, while the embarkation was proceeding, he retired to his chamber and took up the famous volume of Plato on the immortality of the soul. Look-

ing up, he observed that his sword had been removed by his anxious attendants. In the irritation of the moment he gave way to a burst of violence, such as often marked the conduct of the Roman master, and struck his slave a blow which bruised his own hand. To his friends he exclaimed that he needed not a sword to kill himself, but could easily put an end to his life by dashing his head against the wall, or by merely holding his breath. Reassured, perhaps, by his recovered calmness, they restored him his weapon and left him once more alone. At midnight he sent again to know if the embarkation was completed. The last vessel, he was assured, was at the moment leaving the quay. Thereupon he threw himself on his bed, as if about to take his rest for the night; but when all was quiet he seized his sword and thrust it into his stomach. The wound was not immediately mortal, and he rolled groaning upon the floor. The noise summoned his anxious attendants. Means were hastily employed to restore him, but on coming to himself he repulsed his disconsolate friends, and tearing open the fatal wound expired with the same dogged resolution which had marked every action of his life. Cato had no cause to despair of retaining life under the new tyranny. At an earlier period he had meditated, in such an event, seeking refuge in retirement and philosophical study. But his views of the Highest Good had deepened and saddened with the fall of the men and things he had most admired. He now calmly persuaded himself that with the loss of free action he had lost the true end of being. He regarded his career as prematurely closed, and deemed it his duty to extinguish an abortive existence. Cæsar, when he heard of his self-destruction, lamented that he had been robbed of the pleasure of pardoning him; and to his comrades he extended, according to the most credible accounts, the same clemency he had always shown to his fellow-citizens. But it is mortifying to learn that with all this apparent generosity he could at a later period write under trifling provocation a petulant volume which he called the 'Anti-Cato,' ridiculing the sage's vain pretensions, and raking up unworthy stories against him.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Honours showered upon Cæsar at Rome—His four triumphs, his games and largesses—Campaign in Spain—Battle of Munda—Defeat and death of Cnæus Pompeius—Cæsar's fifth triumph—Representatives of all nations at Rome—Cæsar introduces foreigners into the Senate—Further distinctions heaped upon him—Dictatorship and consulship for five years; the imperium, tribunate, principate, and chief pontificate for life also—Cæsar's policy of unification—He plans the redaction of a code of laws—He reforms the calendar—His great constructive works completed or only designed—Cæsar's private life and manners—His irreligion and superstition—Cleopatra at Rome—Her influence over Cæsar—The people resent it—Cæsar finds himself ill at ease in the city, and makes preparations for a great war in the East.—(B.C. 46-44.)

THE honours which a cringing Senate now heaped upon Cæsar have degraded him in the eyes of posterity far more than they exalted him in those of his contemporaries. A Supplication of forty days had already been decreed in honour of his victory when he appeared once more in Italy at the end of July. A statue was U.C. 708. erected to him in the Capitol; another was inscribed to B.C. 46. 'Cæsar the demigod.' He was to use a golden chair in the Senate-house, his image was to be borne in the procession of the gods and laid with theirs at their solemn banquet. The seventh month of the year, the fifth of the ancient calendar, changed its name from Quintilis to Julius, which, strange to say, it has ever since retained among us. Temples were dedicated to 'Cæsar's Clemency,' a transparent abstraction which readily lapsed into the direct worship of his own divinity. The dictatorship was now conferred upon him for ten years, a limitation which was speedily dispensed with. He was invested for three years with the powers of the censorship without a colleague, under the title of Guardianship of Manners, whereby he acquired the right of revising at his sole discretion the lists of the knights and senators. He was to nominate to one-half of the curule magistracies, the consulships only excepted, and appoint to the prætorian provinces; that is to say, he was to strip the people so far of their prerogative of election, and the Senate of that of administration. In the Senate he was to take his seat between the consuls, and be the first to pronounce his opinion; that is to say, he was to be paramount in the assembly both in station and influence. If the diadem, the symbol of kingly rule, and the name of king itself was still

withheld from him, he was allowed to wreath his bald temples with the laurel, the badge of martial greatness, and to *prefix* to his name the title of *Imperator*. Yet he was not ashamed to combine with these unseemly decorations the title of 'Father of his country,' the most glorious appellation a free people can bestow, conferred by a decree upon Camillus, by acclamation upon Cicero. He celebrated four triumphs over the Gauls, over Ptolemæus, over Pharnaces, and over Juba; but he claimed none for the victory of Pharsalia. The soldiers who followed his car shouted with the usual military licence derisive songs in the ears of their commander; while the citizens gazed with wonder, perhaps with alarm, on the children of Gaul and Spain, of Epirus and Africa, who served under his banner, and who could hardly fail to know that they were really the masters of the city. Cæsar's first care was to gratify his armed followers with liberal largesses, his next to compliment the people generally with corresponding munificence. They were feasted at a splendid banquet, at which the mighty multitude reclined before 22,000 tables, each table having three couches, and each couch, we may suppose, its three guests. The feast was followed by the shows of the circus and the theatre. The combats of wild beasts and gladiators outdid all previous exhibitions, and the Romans were shocked at the leave Cæsar gave to several of their knights to descend into the arena. It is recorded that he stretched over the circus an awning of silk, the rarest and most precious production of the East. He also opened a new Forum and worshipped publicly in the temple of 'Venus, his ancestress,' the patroness of his house, for whom he had woven a breastplate of British pearls, and whose name he had made his watchword on the days of his greatest victories.

These ceremonies took place in September. As soon as they were completed the Imperator quitted Rome once more to suppress the last revolt of the vanquished republicans in Spain. While the event of the African campaign was yet undecided Cnæus had repaired to the province of the West, where his father's name was still held in the highest reverence, and raised the banner, not of 'Rome' or the 'Senate,' but of 'Pietas,' or 'filial duty.' He had gathered around him adventurers from all camps; and Cæsar, who regarded the war as an affair with outlaws and banditti, had left it to the care of his lieutenants, till their ill-success roused him at last to make an effort in person. The cruelty he exercised upon these hateful enemies shows how little title they possessed to be treated as Romans. The struggle, protracted for several months, was closed at

last on the field of Munda, where Cæsar, after being reduced to great extremity, gained at last a crowning victory. Thirty thousand of the vanquished perished on that fatal day, and among them were Varus and Labienus, and many other nobles. Cnæus escaped from the scene of disaster, gained the coast and put to sea, but was discovered on casually landing and killed. Of all the republican chiefs Sextus, the younger son of the great Pompeius, was now the sole survivor in arms. He hid himself in the wildest districts of the peninsula and put himself at the head of roving bands of natives, who refused subjection to Rome, till occasion served for reappearing on the public scene. Cæsar devoted some months to disposing the affairs of the western provinces. The battle of Munda was fought on the 17th of March, 45; but the conqueror was not at liberty to re-enter Rome till September.

On his return the conqueror celebrated a fresh triumph over the Iberians; the miserable outcasts whom Cnæus had banded together were all confounded together under the common title of strangers and enemies. The triumph was followed as usual by games and festivals, which kept the populace in a fever of delight and admiration. Plays, it is said, were represented in various languages for the benefit of every people domiciled in the great city. The subjects of the empire had entered Rome in Cæsar's train, and thus inaugurated the union of the capital with the provinces. Kings and commonwealths sent their ambassadors in this mighty congress of nations. Among them were the Moors and the Numidians, the Gauls and the Iberians, the Britons and the Armenians, the Germans and the Scythians. The Jews, insulted by Pompeius and plundered by Crassus, offered their willing homage to the champion who alone of all the Romans had addressed them in the language of kindliness and respect. Cleopatra, the queen of Egypt, came, her crown in her hand, offering her treasure and her favours to her admirer and preserver. Meanwhile it is Cæsar's glory that his hand fell heavily upon none of his fellow-citizens. His affront to the knight Laberius, whom he degraded by making him enact on the stage one of his own comic pieces, though exciting among the citizens some remark and pretended indignation, hardly deserves to be remembered against the nephew of Marius, who forgot the banishment of his uncle, the ruins of Carthage and the marshes of Minturnæ; the avenger of the Sullan revolution, who scorned to retaliate the proscriptions; the advocate of Cathegus and Lentulus, who refrained from demanding blood for blood. It is worth

remarking that Cicero, the most humane perhaps of his own party, could hardly persuade himself of the possibility of Cæsar abstaining from massacre. Far from approving the taste of his flatterers in removing the statues of Sulla and Pompeius, the victor caused them to be restored to their places before the rostra among the effigies of the noblest champions of the free state. Towards the institutions of the commonwealth he evinced a similar spirit of deference. While making himself an autocrat in every essential exercise of power, he maintained at least in outward seeming the ancient landmarks of freedom, the Senate, the comitia, and the magistracies. But he had long before said that the republic was no more than a shadow, and these very institutions had been the instruments by which tyrants had worked out their own ambitious projects. Cæsar could sway the Roman world unchecked by the interference of a Senate of which two-thirds perhaps were nominees of his own. He had raised the number of the assembly to 900, thus degrading the honour by making it cheap, and he lowered its estimation still more by pouring into it his allies from the provinces, his soldiers, and perhaps even his captives. The Romans made a jest of these upstart strangers losing themselves amidst the forest of columns in the public places, and placards were posted recommending no good citizen to guide them to the Senate-house. The Council thus constituted acted, as might be expected, with gross servility, which made Cæsar himself blush. He refused many of the prerogatives it would have thrust upon him; but he retained, as the avowed champion of the people, the appropriate distinction of the Tribunician power, which also rendered his person inviolable. To the reality of power he added its outward signs. In the Senate, the theatre, and the circus he seated himself on a golden chair in a robe of regal magnificence. Apart from the title of king no token of royalty was more marked among the ancients than the hereditary descent of offices and distinctions. The *imperium* or military rule, which had been granted to Cæsar for life, was rendered transmissible to his children, and together with it the transcendent dignity of the sovereign pontificate.

The dictatorship for life, the consulship for five years, with the full command of the public treasure, secured to Cæsar the executive power of the state: The *imperium* gave him the command of its forces; the tribunate entrusted him with a veto upon its legislation. As *princeps*, or first man of the Senate, he guided the debates of the great council of the nation; as controller of manners even the

personal composition of that assembly depended on his will. As chief pontiff he interpreted the religion of the state, and made omens and auguries declare themselves at his bidding. He was constituted, in fact, the autocrat of the Roman commonwealth. Nevertheless he had assumed no title inconsistent with the principles of the republic and the precedents of its ancient or contemporary history.

We find it hard to conceive that while laying the foundations of his empire thus carefully and discreetly Cæsar could have looked merely to the gratification of a selfish ambition. Surely indications of a higher aim are not wanting. To combine the various elements of his worldwide dominion into one national body was necessarily a slow and tentative process, nor did he seek to hasten it by violent or even vigorous measures. It sufficed him to give it a first impulse, by attaching to his own person distinguished foreigners and promoting them to places of trust and dignity in the city; by introducing Gauls and others into the Senate; by opening the franchise to whole classes of useful subjects, as, for instance, to the medical profession, who were mostly of Grecian origin; by founding great colonies at Carthage and Corinth, and preparing, as we are given to believe, the enfranchisement of the population of Sicily, as the province nearest to Italy. Cæsar refrained from pampering his veterans, after the manner of Sulla and Pompeius, with estates which they knew not how to cultivate, and his military colonies were few and obscure. But he repaid their services by ample largesses, and he preferred to retain them still for the most part under his standards for further conquests, which he did not cease to contemplate. He proceeded to develop the material unity of the vast regions before him by an elaborate geographical survey, a work which would require the labours of an extensive commission for many years. Another work which he undertook with the same view to general and permanent utility was the combination in a compact code of the fragments of Roman law dispersed in thousands of precedents, the edicts of the prætors, the replies of the learned, the decisions of pontiffs, and the traditions of patrician houses, representing as they did the process by which the ancient law of the little municipality of Rome had been for centuries growing into an universal jurisprudence. Such a mighty work had already been contemplated by Cicero, as the hopeless vision of the philanthropist and philosopher; but Cæsar's practical sagacity saw that it not only ought to be done, but could be done, and doubtless, had he lived ten or twenty years

longer, he would have anticipated by six centuries the glory of the imperial legislator Justinian.

One further work of equal utility, but fortunately of smaller compass, was the reformation of the calendar, and this it was given to the great Julius to effect, and posterity has called it by his name. The Roman year, even before the time of Cæsar, ought to have averaged the term of 365 days and six hours; so near had the astronomers of the period of Numa already arrived at the real length of the earth's revolution round the sun. This year had been calculated on the basis of 354 days, with the intercalation every second year of a month of twenty-two and twenty-three days alternately; but another day had been added to the 354, to make an odd or fortunate number, and to compensate for this superfluous insertion the number of intercalations was proportionally diminished by a very intricate process. In the course of time the pontiffs, to whose superior skill the keeping of the calendar had been entrusted, had shrouded their science in a veil of mystery, and turned it to political or private ends. They commanded the intercalation of a month arbitrarily when it suited them to favour a partisan by the extension of his year of office, or the postponement of the day on which his note of hand should become due. They abstained from the requisite insertion at the instance of some provincial governor who had made his fortune, and was anxious to come home. Their control over the length of the civil year had become an engine of state. The grievance was intolerable. In the distracted state of public affairs the pontiffs had abstained from intercalating since the year 52, and had even then left the civil calendar some weeks in advance of the real time. Since that date each year had reckoned only 355 days, and the civil equinox had got eighty days in advance of the astronomical. The consuls, accordingly, who were supposed to enter on their office the 1st of January, 46, really commenced their functions on October the 13th, 47. The confusion hence resulting may be easily imagined. The Roman seasons were marked by appropriate festivals assigned to certain fixed days, and associated with the religious worship of the people. At the period of harvest and vintage, for instance, seasonable offerings were made, which it was no longer possible to provide on the days assigned for them. The husbandman rejected the use of the calendar altogether, and depended on his own rude observations of the planets.

Cæsar had acquired a complete knowledge of astronomy, in which his duties as chief pontiff might give him a particular in-

terest. He composed a treatise on the subject, which long retained its value as a technical exposition. With the help of Sosigenes, the great master of the science at the time, he devised the calendar which is still known as the Julian, with a slight error which grew in the course of centuries into importance, and required the correction of Pope Gregory XIII., in the year 1652; a correction, however, which was not adopted in England till the middle of the last century. The basis of Cæsar's reform was that the commencement of the new era should coincide with the first new moon after the shortest day. In order to make the year of the city 45 thus begin, ninety days required to be added to the current year. In the first place, an intercalary month of twenty-three days was inserted between the 23rd and 24th of February, and at the end of November two new months were added of thirty days each, together with a supplementary addition of seven days more. The period which was marked by these additions received vulgarly the appellation of 'the year of confusion;' but 'the last year of confusion,' it has been justly remarked, would have been its more appropriate title.

Like almost all the great men of Rome, Cæsar had moreover a passion for material construction. Of all the works, however, that he designed, few were completed, many were not even commenced, and none have left any vestiges of importance. The substructions of his basilica and his forum may, indeed, still be partially traced; but the design he conceived of extending the pomerium of the city was reserved for his successor, and no attempt was ever made to turn, as he had intended, the course of the Tiber to enlarge the Campus Martius. It was not till long after him that the Pomptine marshes were drained, and a harbour constructed at Ostia. The Isthmus of Corinth has never yet been cut through; undoubtedly there was a time, though it has long since passed, when such a work would have been one of great public utility.

With all these schemes in view or in actual progress, Cæsar had still his hours of recreation, and he shone in private life among the most cultivated men of his time. There is no feature of Roman life which we can regard with so much satisfaction as the tone of habitual intercourse among public men at this period. The daily conflicts of the bar and forum would have only embittered their mutual feelings had they not been accompanied by the humanizing influence of social discussion on the neutral topics of literature and philosophy. The private intercourse of the great statesmen of

Rome is described as full of modest dignity and kindly forbearance. To this pleasing result every school of moral science contributed; but none of them perhaps studied so well as the Epicurean the art of making society agreeable. To this school Cæsar himself and most of his personal friends professed their adherence. The circle of his intimates comprised Cornelius Balbus, an acute man of business; Asinius Pollio, a devoted student; A. Hirtius, who, like his master, both fought and wrote and talked well; C. Oppius, full of gentleness and affection; C. Matius, thoughtful, generous, and disinterested. Among these and others of similar stamp Cæsar unbent from the cares of empire, and often abandoned himself without restraint to the enjoyments of festive mirth. At table, indeed, surrounded by free livers, Cæsar was distinguished for his moderation. Cato had said of him, long before, that of all the revolutionists of his day he alone had come sober to the task of destruction. But his amours were numerous, and their character peculiarly scandalous; for his countrymen still professed to regard the corruption of a Roman matron as a public wrong; while his attachment to a foreigner, such as Cleopatra, was denounced as a flagrant violation of religious and social principles. In religion the Epicureans were sceptics, and Cæsar openly pronounced his unbelief in the dogma of a future state, the foundation of all religion. Nor did he hesitate to defy the omens which the priests were specially appointed to observe. Yet Cæsar, free-thinker as he was, could not escape the general thralldom of superstition. He crawled on his knees up the steps of the temple of Venus to propitiate Nemesis. Before the battle of Pharsalia he addressed a prayer to the gods, whom he denied in the Senate and derided among his associates. He appealed to the omens before passing the Rubicon. He carried about with him in Africa a certain Cornelius a man of no personal distinction, but whose name might be deemed auspicious on the battlefields of Scipio and Sulla.

The queen of Egypt had followed her august admirer to Italy, and he, scrupling to exhibit her publicly in the city, had installed her in his house and gardens on the other side of the Tiber. There she held her levées for the reception of the noblest Romans, and her blandishments may have helped to soothe some of their rudest resentments. Cicero himself condescended to solicit an interview with her. She rewarded him with the promise of Greek volumes from Alexandria, rendered perhaps doubly precious by the recent conflagration. But the populace were shocked at the rumour that

Cæsar meditated raising this barbarian mistress to the dignity of a Roman wife. He was married, indeed, already, to the noble daughter of Calpurnius Piso; but divorce was easy, and involved no public scandal. Cicero himself had lately dismissed Terentia for alleged incompatibility of temper, and allied himself to a youthful heiress. Besides, one of his creatures was prepared, it was said, with a measure to remove all restrictions, and allow him to marry as many wives as he pleased, of whatever race or station. But Cæsar either had no such inclinations, or refrained from yielding to them. Cleopatra bore him a son, and continued to remain at Rome, but no marriage was made between them.

Though arrived, as we have seen, at the summit of actual power, Cæsar still chafed under the restraints imposed upon him by opinion and prejudice, and his temper assumed a capriciousness and an arrogance from which he had been hitherto singularly free. The Roman magnates, accustomed to perfect equality in their intercourse with one another, were mortified at the haughtiness assumed by the chief of their class, surrounded as he was by a crowd of flatterers, through whom the independent patrician could with difficulty force his way. Once, when the senators came in a body to communicate to him their decrees in his honour, he omitted to rise from his seat to receive them. A favourite, it was said, had plucked him by the sleeve and bade him remember that he was their master. It was reported that he had called Sulla a *fool* for resigning the dictatorship. It is possible, however, that Cæsar was at least equally annoyed at the rudeness of his pretended equals. After all, he was not at ease as the first citizen of the republic, which he still professed himself to be. He was still dreaming of his accustomed place at the head of the legions, to whom his imperium was a real and accepted sovereignty. The disaster of Carrhæ might furnish a pretext for war, and the influence of Mithridates, he might remember, had extended from the Caspian and the Euxine to the head of the Adriatic. He conceived, we are assured, the gigantic project of first crushing the Parthians, and then, returning across the Tanais and Borysthenes, subduing the barbarians of the North, and finally assailing the Germans in the rear. At the close of the year 45 he directed his troops to cross the Adriatic and assemble in Illyricum, there to await his speedy arrival. He contemplated an absence of considerable duration, and provided for the succession of chief magistrates for the two following years. On the 1st of January, 44, he entered on his fifth consulship, with M. Antonius for his colleague.

CHAPTER XLVII.

C. Octavius begins his career in the camp at Apollonia—Conspiracy formed against Cæsar by Cassius and others—Character of M. Junius Brutus—Assassination of Cæsar—The liberators assemble in the Capitol—The people unfavourable to them—They negotiate with M. Antonius—An amnesty proclaimed—Cæsar's 'acts' confirmed, with his assignment of provinces to Brutus, Cassius, and others of the conspirators—Cæsar's will and bequests to the people—His funeral obsequies in the Forum—Artful harangue of Antonius—Movement among the people—Antonius becomes paramount in the city—He obtains a sanction for all Cæsar's projected 'acts'—His arbitrary proceedings—Futility of the assassination.

THE destined heir of Cæsar's imperium was already in the camp at Apollonia, taking lessons in arts and arms under the ablest teachers. This young man was Caius Octavius, the son of Cæsar's sister's daughter, who now in his nineteenth year gave high promise of future excellence, marred only by the extreme delicacy of his health. The favour with which his great uncle distinguished him had prompted him to demand the mastership of the horse, but this had been refused him, as a promotion beyond his years. Cæsar, however, had advanced his family from the plebeian to the patrician class, an honour he had accorded to a few Gentes of great antiquity, among which was the Tullian, to which Cicero's character had imparted new lustre. He had allowed it, moreover, to be understood that he was about to make the young Octavius his own son by adoption, to bequeath him his patrimony and the dignities which the Senate had declared hereditary in his family. These dignities, indeed, were not as yet associated in the mind of the Romans with any idea of succession. But they might easily presume that their hero was intent on securing a title on which, according to their notions, a dynasty could be founded. Cæsar, it was reported, desired to be hailed as *king*. His flatterers suggested it, his enemies readily believed it, and hoped to make him unpopular by urging him to claim it. One morning a laurel garland with a diadem attached was found affixed to his statue before the rostra. The tribunes indignantly tore it down, the populace expressing great satisfaction at their conduct, and saluting them with the title of the new Brutuses. Cæsar affected at least to applaud them. Shortly afterwards a second experiment was tried. As the dictator returned from the Latin festival on the Alban mount officious voices were hired to hail him as *king*. A

low and stifled murmur again indicated the disapproval of the people. 'I am no king, but Cæsar,' he hastily exclaimed. His friends, however, if such were the real promoters of the intrigue, were not yet satisfied that the prize was beyond his reach. On the 15th of February, the day of the Lupercalia Cæsar was seated on his gilded chair before the rostra, to preside over that popular festival. The consul Antonius was the chief performer in the ceremonies. He ran his course through the multitude, stripped to the waist, striking the women with a thong of goatskin, a charm which was supposed to avert sterility. Approaching the seat of the dictator, he drew from his girdle a diadem, and made as if he would offer it to him, exclaiming that it was the gift of the Roman people. There was some faint applause, but Cæsar affected to put the diadem from him, and a loud burst of genuine applause succeeded. Antonius presented it a second time, with no better success. 'I am not king,' repeated Cæsar, 'the only king of the Romans is Jupiter;' and he ordered the diadem to be removed and suspended in the temple in the Capitol.

The tone in which Cæsar repudiated these offers baffled any attempt to excite the popular feeling against him. But among the nobles were many who cherished bitter hostility towards him. The presumption of any one man to lord it permanently over them rankled deeply in their bosoms. A plot was formed for his destruction, which embraced sixty or even eighty conspirators, and among them not a few who professed the warmest devotion to him. Decimus Brutus had received from him the government of the Cisalpine, and was already designated as consul for a future year. Trebonius had just quitted the consulship for the government of Asia. Casca, Cimber, and others, had received various marks of his favour. Yet all these men now joined in the intrigue against his life. The most active conspirator, and perhaps the author of the design, was C. Cassius, who had recently been appointed prætor. An Epicurean in sentiment and temper, he cared little for liberty or the republic, to which he had proved himself unfaithful. But he was by nature vain and vindictive; his temper fluctuated between mean subservience and rude independence. His sharp and acrid humour had not escaped the observation of Cæsar, by whom the pale and lean were accounted dangerous, and who loved, as he said, the company of the sleek and light-hearted.

The conspirators required the charm of a popular name to sanction their projected tyrannicide. M. Junius Brutus, the nephew

of Cato, pretended to trace his descent from a third son of the founder of the republic, whose elder brothers had perished by the axe of the lictor. His mother Servilia derived her lineage from the renowned Ahala, the slayer of Spurius Mælius. But, far from inheriting the zeal of his progenitors, the Brutus of the expiring free state had acquiesced in Cæsar's usurpation with less apparent reluctance than perhaps any other of the Pompeians. Despondent in her hour of distress, he had been the last to join, the earliest to desert, the banner of the republic. After Pharsalia he was the first to seek refuge in the camp of the victor; in the city he was the foremost to court the friendship of the dictator. He was zealous in serving his interests in important charges, nor did he blush to govern the Cisalpine for Cæsar while his uncle still held Utica against him. A feeble panegyric of the sturdy sage whom he had abandoned while he affected to adopt his principles, seemed to Brutus a sufficient tribute to his virtues. He had divorced his wife Claudia to espouse the philosopher's daughter Porcia, a woman of more masculine spirit than his own. But, thus doubly connected with strength and virtue, Brutus had failed nevertheless to acquire the firmness which nature had denied him. While professing the character of a student he still courted public life for the sake of its emoluments. His greed of money had been sordid and even iniquitous. The countenance of Cæsar raised him to an eminence which pleased and dazzled him, and he was flattered by a saying attributed to the great man, which we must suppose to have been meant in jest, that of all the Romans he was the worthiest to succeed himself in power. The weakness of his character may be estimated from the means employed to work upon him. A paper affixed to the statue of the ancient Brutus with the words 'Would thou were now alive'; billets thrust into his hand inscribed 'Brutus, thou sleepest, thou art no longer Brutus,' shook the soul of the philosopher to its centre. Under the influence of Cassius, who had married his sister, he was led to embrace the schemes of the conspirators, and assumed the place of chief adviser which they pretended to offer him. His renowned name became at once a charm of potency. The plot ripened to its execution. As long as Cæsar remained at Rome his fearless demeanour exposed him to the daggers of assassins, for he had dismissed the guard which had been appointed him, and daily appeared in public with no other attendance than that of his unarmed companions, for the wearing of arms in the city was not a Roman custom. To the remonstrances of his friends he replied that,

if danger was at hand, it was better to die at once than live always in fear of dying. But from the moment he should withdraw from the city to the camp his safety would be assured by the fidelity of the soldiers. It was apprehended, not without reason, that once more at the head of the legions he would not return as a citizen to Rome. He had promised, it was said, to restore the famous towers of Ilium, the cradle of the people of Æneas and Romulus. Possibly he might transfer thither the throne which the pride of the Romans would not suffer him to establish in the Capitol. Or, if the charms of Cleopatra should still retain their power, he might take up his abode in Alexandria, and remove the seat of empire to the shrine of the Macedonian conqueror.

Such considerations as these forbade delay. The preparations for the emperor's departure were almost complete. The Senate was convened for the Ides of March, the 15th day of the month. On this day, as soon as he should enter the curia, it was determined to strike the blow. The prediction was already current that the Ides of March should be fatal to him. Still he refused to take any precautions. Calpurnia dreamed a fearful dream; the victims presented evil omens. At the last moment Cæsar showed some signs of hesitation. He would have excused his absence from the assembly. On the other side, Brutus was far more moved, and was perhaps only sustained in his resolution by the constancy of Porcia, from whom he could not withhold the secret. Decimus, with more nerve, still urged Cæsar to make his appearance, and laughed him out of the scruples he had manifested. As Cæsar proceeded along the Forum to the theatre of Pompeius, in the Campus, more than one person pressed, it is said, upon him to warn him of his danger. One man, indeed, thrust a paper into his hand, and implored him to read it instantly. But he paid no heed, and held it still rolled up in his hand when he arrived at the Senate-house. He observed complacently to the augur Spurinna, 'The Ides of March are come.' 'Yes,' muttered the sage, 'but not yet passed.' He entered the hall, his enemies closing round him, and keeping his friends at a distance, Trebonius being specially charged to detain Antonius at the door. On his taking his seat Cimber approached with a petition for his brother's pardon. The others, as was concerted, joined in the supplication, grasping his hands and embracing his neck. Cæsar at first put them aside gently; they redoubled their urgency; Cimber seized his toga with both hands and pulled it over his arms. Then Casca, who was

behind, drew his stylus, or a dagger concealed in its case, and grazed his shoulder with an ill-directed stroke. Cæsar disengaged one hand with a cry, and snatched at the hilt. 'Help!' cried Casca, and at the moment the others aimed each his dagger at their victim. Cæsar for an instant defended himself, and then wounded one of his assailants with his stylus; but when he distinguished Brutus in the press, and saw the steel flashing in his hand also, 'What! thou too, Brutus?' he exclaimed, let go his grasp of Casca, and drawing his robe over his face, made no further resistance. The assassins stabbed him through and through, and he fell dead at the foot of Pompeius's statue.

When the conspirators looked around them the hall was already empty. The senators had fled with precipitation; centurions, licitors, and attendants had vanished with them, and the harangue which Brutus was about to deliver commanded no listeners. Antonius had slipped through the crowd, exchanged clothes with a slave or client, and made his way unperceived to his house in the Carinæ. Among the citizens there was general consternation, no one knowing on whom the next blow would fall, or which party would begin with riot and massacre. Both had arms within reach. On the one hand Decimus Brutus had provided for his friends' defence by placing some gladiators in the Pompeian theatre; on the other the city was filled with Cæsar's veterans, and Lepidus, his master of the horse, commanded a legion outside the walls.

The assassins now marched forth from the Curia, brandishing their daggers, and wrapping their gowns about their left arms for defence against a sudden attack. They reached the Forum, preceded by a cap of liberty hoisted upon a spear, exclaiming that they had killed a king and a tyrant. The place was filled with an agitated crowd, but they met with no response. Dismayed at this indifference, the liberators, as they now called themselves, retired hastily in quest of a place of refuge in the temple of Jupiter, on the Capitoline. Here they found the swordsmen of Decimus, and under their protection they barred the gates of the ill-appointed citadel. As the evening closed some of the republican magnates came to join them; among them was Cicero, who, though unconnected with the conspiracy, recovered hope upon its apparent success, and advised that the Senate should be convened immediately. But Brutus at least had less confidence in the authority of the legitimate council of the nation, and chose to make another attempt to move the populace. On the morrow he descended into the forum. To him, indeed, the people

listened with cold respect, but when Cinna and Dolabella addressed them they broke out into violence, and drove the discontented patriots back to their quarters. During the past night Antonius had not been idle: he had communicated secretly with Calpurnia, and obtained possession of her husband's private treasures and also of his will. With the aid of his two brothers, one of whom was a prætor, the other a tribune, he opened, as consul, the national coffers in the temple of Ops, and drew from thence two millions of sesterces. With these resources in money he made advances to Lepidus, and received his promise of support.

Antonius, the minister and favourite companion of Cæsar, was regarded by many as his natural successor. Hitherto known chiefly for his bravery and dissipation, he was now about to display the arts of a consummate intriguer. Cicero stood alone in dissuading the liberators from negotiating with him. But they believed his professions of loyalty to the republic, and hoped to gain an ascendancy over the pliant temper which had yielded so easily to the influence of the dictator. It was agreed that he should convene the Senate for the next day, the 17th of March. He appointed for the place of meeting the temple of Tellus, near the forum, which he filled with armed soldiers. The murderers dared not leave the Capitol, and the discussion on their fatal deed was conducted in their absence. The majority would have declared Cæsar a tyrant; but when Antonius represented that this would be to annul his acts and appointments, Dolabella and others interested in them resisted with all their might. While they still deliberated Antonius passed into the forum. The people hailed him with acclamations, and bade him take care of his own life. Cicero pointed out to the senators the only course that could relieve them with dignity from their embarrassment. He demanded an *amnesty*, an act of oblivion which should confirm every acquired right, and leave the deed of the conspirators to the judgment of posterity. In private he had declared himself a warm approver of the tyrannicide. But he now confessed in his public acts that the peace of the city and the last chance of senatorial ascendancy required a compromise. An amnesty was decreed. The next day Cicero harangued and calmed the populace. They invited the conspirators to descend from the Capitol, Lepidus and Antonius sending their children as hostages, and the one entertaining Brutus, the other Cassius at supper. Next morning all parties met again in the Curia, and the dictator's assignment of the provinces was confirmed. Trebonius succeeded to Asia, Cimber to Bithynia, Decimus

to the Cisalpine, while Macedonia was secured to Brutus, and Syria to Cassius, on the expiration of their term of office at home.

Notwithstanding the power thus surrendered to the Cæsarian chiefs Antonius was still master of the situation. Since Cæsar was not 'a tyrant' and his acts were maintained as legitimate, his testament must be accepted, and his remains honoured with a public funeral. Antonius recited to the people their favourite's last will. He had adopted for his son the youthful Octavius; he had endowed the Roman people with his gardens on the bank of the Tiber, and had bequeathed to every citizen 300 sesterces. Their fury against his murderers was exasperated by the sense of his liberality to themselves. The funeral pyre had been constructed in the Campus Martius, but the eulogy of the deceased was to be pronounced in the forum. A shrine glittering with gold was erected before the rostra, in which the body was laid on a couch of gold and ivory; at its head was suspended like a warrior's trophy the toga in which the dictator had been slain, hacked by the assassins' daggers. The mangled remains were concealed from public gaze, but they were replaced by a waxen figure, on which his three-and-twenty wounds were faithfully represented. Dramatic shows formed as usual a part of the funeral ceremony, and the sensibilities of the people were moved by the scenic effect of the deaths of Agamemnon and Ajax, caused by the treason or cruelty of their nearest and dearest.

While the citizens were thus melting in compassion or glowing with resentment Antonius stepped forward, as the chief magistrate of the republic, to recite the praises of the mighty dead. He read decrees which had heaped honours upon Cæsar, which had declared his person inviolable, his authority supreme, himself the chief and Father of his country. And then he pointed to the bleeding corpse which neither laws nor oaths had shielded from outrage. Lastly, moving towards the Capitol, he shouted, 'I at least am prepared to keep my vow, to avenge the victim I could not save.' The people had been gradually worked up to feelings of fanatic devotion. They forbade the body to be carried outside the city; they insisted that it should be burnt within the walls. Chairs, tables, and benches were snatched from the adjacent buildings, a heap of fuel was raised before the pontiff's dwelling in the forum, and the body was hastily thrown upon it. The temple of Castor and Pollux stood hard by, on the spot where the two majestic warriors had announced the victory of Regillus. Now also two youths of august mien and countenance, girt with swords and javelin in hand,

were seen to apply the torch. A divine sanction was thus given to the deed ; every scruple was overruled. The people continued to pile up brushwood, the veterans added their arms, the matrons their ornaments, even the trinkets on the children's frocks were cast into the fire. Cæsar was beloved by the Romans ; he was not less dear to the foreigners. Gauls, Iberians, Africans, and Orientals crowded around the pile, and gave vent to the sense of their common misfortune. The success of Antonius was complete. The populace soon excited themselves to fury, rushed through the streets with blazing brands, and tried to fire the houses of the conspirators. Their rude assaults were for the moment repulsed, but Brutus and his associates dared not show themselves in public, and either made escape from the city or lay hid within it. The consul now interfered to check the progress of disorder, and sought means of conciliating the Senate, whose countenance he still needed. The Senate had decreed oblivion of political offences. Antonius proposed that Sextus, the last of the proscribed Pompeii, should be recalled. Cæsar had abused the prerogatives of the dictatorship ; Antonius carried a resolution for the abolition of that magistracy for ever ; nor, in fact, was it ever revived. The passions of the multitude were fermenting in public riots. Once more Antonius armed his soldiers and put down their movements with unsparing hand. Nor did he fail to amuse the liberators themselves. He sought an interview with Brutus and Cassius in their retreat and offered to guarantee their security. When they declined to enter the city, where they still feared for their safety, but in which their prætorial office required them to reside, he obtained for them a charge for supplying provisions which might authorise their absence. For all these services Antonius might ask one favour. He complained that he too was in danger from occult machinations. The Senate blindly granted him an armed body-guard. He speedily raised this force to 6,000 men, and thus secured himself from the fate of a Mælius or a Gracchus.

The Senate had confirmed Cæsar's acts. Antonius caused this sanction to be extended to the acts which he had merely projected ; and possessing, as he did, all his papers, and having gained his secretary, Faberius, he could pretend or forge authority for whatever measures he chose to effect. Laws, treasures, magistracies, everything lay at his feet. Things which Cæsar himself had not dared to do Antonius did in his name ; he sold places of distinction, and even provinces, and speedily retrieved his own dilapidated fortunes, and proceeded to purchase senators and soldiers and tributary sovereigns.

He bought over his colleague Dolabella, and fixed him in determined hostility to the party to which he had so recently pledged himself. Nor did he scruple to reverse the dictator's own enactments. He abolished his disposition of the provinces, and broke the engagement he had made with the liberators in depriving Brutus and Cassius of their promised governments. Syria he assigned to Dolabella; Macedonia, with the legions Cæsar had assembled at Apollonia, he seized for himself. 'The tyrant is dead,' sorrowfully murmured Cicero, 'but the tyranny still lives.'

That Cæsar had forfeited the protection of the laws by pushing his ambition beyond the limits of the constitution can admit of no question; whether it was open to any citizen lawfully to slay him is a question not so easily answered; that to slay him by private assassination without form of law was morally a crime most of the ancients and the moderns generally have agreed. But whatever the nature or extent of the crime, the fatal error which his assassins committed admits of no question, and scarcely of any extenuation. 'The tyrant was dead, but the tyranny survived;' nor could any thoughtful statesman doubt that it would do so. Even the warning to usurpers was of no avail, and long experience might have convinced the public men of antiquity that it would not be so. No ambitious man has ever since been deterred from aspiring to the tyranny, if such was his ambition, by the lesson of Cæsar's assassination. Within a week after his death Antonius had set himself up as a second tyrant, hardly less powerful, hardly more disguised, than the first. Another aspirant was about to enter upon the scene; a third tyrant, more powerful than either Cæsar or Antonius, but craftier and more fortunate, was about to seize the sovereignty, and establish the Empire of Rome.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Octavius returns to Rome, and claims the inheritance of Cæsar—Antonius disregards his pretensions—The Senate and people favour him—The liberators assume command in their provinces—Antonius attacks Cicero in the Senate—Cicero retorts—The Philippics or speeches against Antonius—Octavius seduces some legions of Antonius—Antonius betakes himself to the Cisalpine—Octavius joins the consuls in making war upon him—Antonius defeats Pansa, but is defeated by Hirtius—Both the consuls slain—The republicans resume confidence—Octavius suddenly combines with Antonius—Octavius becomes consul—Rout and death of Decimus Brutus—Compact between Octavius, Antonius, and Lepidus, or second Triumvirate—The proscriptions at Rome, and murder of Cicero—The triumvirs prepare for war against the republican leaders.—(B.C. 44–42.)

AMONG the legions at Apollonia the young C. Octavius had spent some months, and the address with which he had attached them to himself gave token of the genius he was soon to display in a wider theatre. Surprised amidst his juvenile exercises by the news of Cæsar's assassination, he was not yet aware of the perilous inheritance bequeathed him. But his mother's letters from Rome, reminding him of the dictator's favour and of his nearness to him in blood, inflamed his hopes, and determined him to return to the city and brave every danger. His friends would have dissuaded him, but the legions pledged themselves to support him, and he went his way without hesitation, and threw himself almost alone on the coast of Apulia. Copies of the will and of the Senate's decrees were here sent him whereupon he boldly assumed the designation of Caius Julius Cæsar Octavianus, and presented himself to the soldiers at Brundisium as the adopted son of the great emperor. He was received with acclamations; the friends and freedmen of the dictator flocked around him; the veterans of the colonies drew their swords and offered to avenge him. But the young adventurer was cautious. He declined the use or display of force. He addressed the Senate in mild and temperate language, claiming as a private citizen the inheritance of a deceased father. Arriving at Cumæ, he learnt that Cicero was sojourning in the neighbourhood. He went to visit him, and readily persuaded the desponding patriot of the loyal moderation of his views. At the end of April he entered Rome. Antonius was absent at the moment on a progress through the peninsula, confirming his old allies and securing new ones.

Octavius was at this time little more than eighteen years of age. In vain did his mother Atia and his stepfather Philippus warn him to desist from claiming the inheritance. He presented himself before the prætor and avowed himself the heir and son of the dictator. He mounted the tribune and harangued the people, pledging himself to discharge the sums bequeathed them by his father. The consul, little alarmed at the proceedings of the rash stripling, delayed his return to Rome till the middle of May. But events moved rapidly, and before their first interview Octavius had made many friends and conciliated many enemies. While protesting friendship towards him he could venture to upbraid Anronius with his slackness in allowing the assassins to go unpunished. He proceeded to claim of him the treasures of the dictator. Antonius replied that all was spent; that it was not Cæsar's own but public money: that the dictator's will, by which the young man claimed it, would have been set aside with all his other acts but for the interference of Antonius himself. But Octavius, though baffled, was not dismayed. Relying on the sense of his abilities, and not less perhaps on the auspicious omens which had marked his progress hitherto, he sold the remnant of Cæsar's effects, as well as his own, borrowed from friends, obtained from his kinsmen Pedius and Pinarius the surrender of their shares of the inheritance, and thus amassed a sufficient sum to discharge the obligation he had assumed. The people were delighted with the gift, and still more with the sacrifice he had made for it. Antonius was startled at the young man's resolution, and amazed at its success. He felt that he could no longer afford to despise such a competitor, and attempted by craft and even by violence to obstruct him. But in vain; the credit of Octavius with the people rose swiftly, and the consul suffered from the contrast.

The conduct of the liberators at this crisis was timid and undecided. Their conferences were attended by Cicero, and animated by the vigorous counsels of Porcia the wife and Servilia the mother of Brutus, but the chiefs themselves were desponding or impatient. Decimus, who alone of the whole party displayed either firmness or forethought, had repaired to the Cisalpine. But whether to amuse his soldiers, or whether he aspired to the futile honours of a triumph, he occupied himself in ravaging the barren valleys of the Alps, while his enemies were intriguing against the liberties of his country. Antonius had secured the six legions in Macedonia, but he wanted a footing nearer Rome, and he intrigued with the Senate for the removal of Decimus. In this he was supported by Octavius, but the

Senate eluded the demand; and meanwhile, as they perhaps expected, the mutual jealousies of the two aspirants to power seemed to increase. Their officers effected a show of reconciliation between them, and they were conducted to the Capitol, there to swear a lasting alliance. The truce, as may be supposed, was hollow, and marred by fresh affronts and recriminations, but the veterans succeeded in maintaining a semblance of co-operation. Meanwhile the activity of the republicans was increasing. They derived fresh hopes from the attitude assumed by Sextus Pompeius at the head of a powerful fleet on the coast of Gaul, and by the legions in Syria, which invited Cassius at once to their quarters. Cicero urged him to seize the opportunity, and anticipate the moment when this command would be wrested from him. 'Be yourself your own Senate,' was the bold advice of the constitutional statesman. Brutus consented to his going, but was more slow to move himself. Still lingering on the coast of Campania he gave directions for the prætorial shows in the city, which he dared not attend in person. Calpurnius Piso inveighed against Antonius in the Senate; but the senators, cowed by military force, failed to support him. Cicero, who had sailed reluctantly from Italy, continued for some days to keep in sight the coast he loved; and when driven at last by stress of weather to set foot on the shores of Calabria, refused again to embark, and directed his steps, with mournful presentiments, towards Rome. But at the same time Brutus made up his mind to quit Italy, and, following the example of Cassius, call the patriots to arms in Greece and Macedonia.

Antonius had convoked the Senate for the 1st of September. Cicero entered Rome the day before, and was gratified with his favourable reception. Nevertheless he shrank from attending the sitting; solemn Supplications were to be voted, and Cæsar's name to be enrolled among the Roman divinities. Perhaps he wished to be attacked rather than to attack. Antonius was the first to make the onset. He inveighed against the absent orator, and threatened to demolish his house on the Palatine. After this burst of malice and defiance he quitted the city to indulge in the licentious pleasures of his Tiburtine villa. The Senate met next day in the temple of Concord, which had resounded with Cicero's eloquence in the process against Catiline. The insults of Antonius had stung him to the quick. He proceeded to vindicate his own conduct both in leaving the city and in returning to it. Refraining from any allusion to the tyrannicide, he analysed the subsequent measures of Antonius, and

denounced the successive steps by which he had abused his possession of Cæsar's papers, advancing posthumous demands, ceasing altogether to consult the Senate, and carrying his resolutions through the comitia of the tribes. He had recalled whom he would from banishment, made what laws he pleased, appointed his own creatures to office, and pleaded the will of the tyrant for every act of selfish and venal policy. The Senate listened with admiration, and their applause warmed the orator's blood and redoubled his energy.

The series of speeches against Antonius which Cicero composed in the course of the following months is known by the name of the *Philippics*, in allusion to the harangues of Demosthenes against the tyrant of Macedon. They claimed, like their immortal prototypes, to be the last indignant assertion of a nation's freedom against a daring aggressor. In the first speech, however, Cicero still kept some terms with his enemy. The declamation is directed against the consul's policy; his personal habits—a moderation unusual with Cicero—are left untouched. After the lapse of some days Antonius returned to Rome, and framed a rejoinder to Cicero's reply. It was a virulent tirade against the orator's entire career, accusing him of the murder of the *Catilinarians*, the assassination of Clodius, the rupture between Cæsar and Pompeius. It denounced him to the veterans as the secret contriver of their hero's destruction. Cicero was again absent. His friends had dissuaded him from appearing before the armed bands with which his assailants overawed debate. The two gladiators were destined never to meet on the same arena. They continued to wage the war of words, but they never saw each other again alive.

During the remainder of the consul's stay in Rome Cicero retired to a villa near Naples. There he composed a second invective, fiercer and more eloquent than the last, but its publication he reserved for a fitter moment. While, however, this war of words was raging Octavius was silently undermining the consul's power with weapons more effective. With promises and largesses he was seducing the soldiers from his standards. Antonius learnt with alarm that the troops he had conveyed to Brundisium were secretly plied by his rival's emissaries. On October 3 he departed in haste to stay their defection. At the same moment Octavius also quitted the city and visited his parent's colonies in Campania, Umbria, and the Cisalpine, among which he collected 10,000 men. He sought at the same time to gain Cicero, and through him the Senate, whose sanction he required to invest his position with some legal authority. He addressed the pliant statesman with frequent letters, praying him

to return to Rome and once more save the state. He promised him entire confidence and docility ; he loaded him with compliments and caresses ; he called him his father.

Nor did Antonius fail to act vigorously. He rebuked the wavering soldiers for their leaning towards the 'rash stripling ;' but when he held forth the promise of a largess below their expectations they derided his parsimony. He offered them 400 sesterces ; his rival was promising 2,000. But Antonius was not easily checked. He caused some centurions—not less than 300, if we may believe Cicero—to be stricken with the axe, whilst his imperious consort Fulvia looked on and stimulated his vengeance. By this act of vigour, coupled with an advance in his pecuniary offers, he brought some battalions together, and repaired with a chosen escort to Rome. On his arrival there he summoned the Senate to hear his charge against Octavius, whom he accused of raising troops without official authority. But at the same moment he learnt that two of his legions had passed over to his rival at Rome. His position was becoming untenable. Sulla, Marius, Cæsar, and Pompeius, every party leader had in turn abandoned the city, where the Senate was paramount, to recruit his forces in the field. With the command of the Cisalpine he had obtained also the commission to drive out of it any pretender to the government. He now summoned Decimus to withdraw. He raised his standard at Tibur ; and when he proclaimed a civil war many of the senators did not hesitate to join the consul who pretended to arm in defence of the republic. At Ariminum his forces amounted to four legions ; Lepidus, already on his route from Spain, commanded four also. Pollio was still in Spain at the head of three more ; and Plancus, in the Farther Gaul, had under him an equal number. These were the forces on which Antonius, it was thought, might rely in his contest with the republicans. But these legions were separated and widely scattered ; the soldiers were disloyal or indifferent, and their leaders had each his own private ends to serve. Decimus, from his central position, might intrigue with each separately, and cut off their communications with one another. A third faction was also in the field. Octavius had raised himself, or wrested from Antonius, as many as five legions ; though possessed of no ostensible command, no office of public trust, still citizens of all classes thronged about him and placed themselves at his disposal. He addressed the Senate with a well-timed manifesto, which immediately recommended him to them as their true champion. Stationing himself at Arretium, he awaited the commencement of hostili-

ties, prepared to side with either party, or to fall upon the victor, as circumstances might direct.

Such was the complication of affairs in the month of November. Cicero meanwhile was working with feverish activity among the senators and citizens, striving to consolidate all parties against Antonius. He exhorted Decimus; he caressed Octavius. But in the West he depended chiefly on the loyalty of Hirtius and Pansa, the consuls elect; while at the same time his eyes were anxiously directed to the opposite quarter, and fixed upon the movements of Brutus and Cassius, Trebonius and Cimber, in the East. The moment had arrived for the publication of the second Philippic: The satire came forth from the orator's desk fortified with the approbation of his private friends, and polished to the keenest edge by repeated touches from the great master himself. It spoke in language loud and decided. It branded Cæsar as a traitor and a tyrant, Antonius as a monster. The author himself it represented as the stay of the commonwealth, the general object of hatred to every hater of his country. It called on every citizen to arm with frantic earnestness. The effect was electrical. The picture drawn of Antonius struck the people with horror. The Senate was nerved with courage to defy him. The consuls elect were fixed at once in the interests of the republic by the acclamations which hailed this proclamation of her wrongs. Cicero, not unjustly elated by the applause which echoed around him, believed himself now the mediator between all parties, the actual chief of the commonwealth. It was the noblest as it was the purest triumph of any Roman since the days of Africanus or Camillus. It was the just reward of so many years of self-devotion, and all our painful sense of the weaknesses by which that career had been disfigured, give way to the heartfelt pleasure of contemplating it.

Antonius had already taken the field, and confined Decimus to the walls of Mutina. The Senate, at Cicero's behest, urged Octavius to attack him, heaping honours upon himself and rewards upon his soldiers. Antonius had still friends who pleaded with them for forbearance, and Hirtius and Pansa made yet an effort to preserve peace. Envoys were sent, negotiations were opened, but all failed. Cicero was loud and furious. He was sustained by

U.C. 711. favourable accounts from Brutus and Cassius, and the
B.C. 43. prospect of aid from Sextus. Early in the year 43 Hirtius and Octavius took the field, and Pansa joined them in the spring with fresh levies. In the absence of the consuls Cicero, though

without an office, was allowed to take the helm of affairs. He poured forth in rapid succession his animated harangues against Antonius; he breathed confidence into the desponding, and redoubled the efforts of the brave. Clothed in the garb of war he traversed the streets, calling for contributions to the public cause, and filling the treasury with fines levied upon the malcontents. At the same time he maintained an active correspondence with the chiefs in the provinces, assured each in turn of the constancy of all the others, and bruited far and wide the high spirit of the veterans, the devotion of the people, the fidelity of the generals, and their abundant resources.

On the approach of Hirtius and Octavius Antonius broke up from his lines before Mutina, and advanced towards them. He kept up some negotiations with them; but suddenly turning round upon Pansa, who was on his way to join them, defeated and mortally wounded him. Hirtius, however, was at hand to save the defeated force from utter rout, and himself engaged the victor a few days later, with the support of Octavius. On this occasion the Antonians were in their turn driven into their camp; but Hirtius fell in the engagement, and thus both the consuls were stricken down at the same moment. At a later period rumours were allowed to circulate that this strange fatality was not altogether accidental; that Octavius himself had struck Hirtius in the back; that he had caused a surgeon to rub poison into Pansa's wound. The Senate and people, however, at Rome forgot in their rejoicings at the victory the disaster which had accompanied it. The citizens carried Cicero to the Capitol with the loudest acclamations. It was he that had urged them to the war; in him they recognised the true victor of the field of Mutina. The contest they believed to be at an end. Decimus, they heard, was intent on pursuing the routed Antonius towards the Alps. Plancus, confirmed in his loyalty to the Senate, was descending from the North, to block the passes into Gaul. At the same moment some successes of Cassius against Dolabella, and the progress of Brutus in Macedonia, and of Sextus on the sea, all concurred to increase their confidence.

Before he expired the consul Pansa, it is said, had called Octavius to his bedside and advertised him of the hatred the Senate really bore him, of the treachery they meditated towards him, and assured him that his only chance of safety lay in a prompt reconciliation with Antonius. Nor did the young aspirant stand in need of any such suggestions. He had already arranged for a quarrel

with Decimus, and declared that the murder of his father Cæsar should never be forgiven. He now let Antonius understand that he had no wish to crush him. He refrained from interfering to prevent his making a junction with Lepidus in the Transalpine. Plancus terminated his long indecision by throwing himself into the arms of the party which was now manifestly the stronger. Antonius found himself at the head of twenty-three legions.

This was the dreadful reality to which the Senate now awoke from their dream of easy triumph. While expecting the arrival of Brutus and Cassius with victorious armies, they had sought to amuse Octavius, and at the same time to seduce from him his army. Cicero himself was prepared to cast away the broken instrument of his policy. The Senate had refused him the consulship: 400 of his veterans came in a body to Rome to press his claim. They still refused; and Octavius crossed the Rubicon at the head of eight legions. The Senate forbade him to approach within ninety miles of the city. At the same time they accorded his demand, together with a largess to his soldiers. But it was too late; Octavius had seized the opportunity he sought, and did not halt till he reached the gates of Rome. Some tardy and inefficient measures were taken for defence, but the senators and consulars slipped one by one through the gates, and betook themselves to the intruder's camp. Cicero, indeed, was among the last to parley. Octavius taunted him with his slackness; he was alarmed, and the next night made his escape. The people, hastily assembled, pretended to elect Octavius to the consulship, and gave him his kinsman Q. Pedius for colleague. This was September 22. On the following day he completed his twentieth year. The remnant of the senators—for many had disappeared—heaped honours upon their conqueror. They commanded Decimus to surrender to him his forces. Octavius directed the murderers of Cæsar to be cited before the tribunals. Judgment passed against them by default, and they were interdicted fire and water.

Octavius, now consul of the republic and leader of a numerous army, could treat with Antonius on equal terms, and offer as much as he could receive. He made the first overtures for an alliance by causing the hasty decrees of the Senate against him and Lepidus to be rescinded. Placed between too such powers, and abandoned by Plancus, Decimus was lost. His troops deserted him by whole cohorts and legions. With a few horsemen he tried to escape into Macedonia through the passes of the Rætian Alps, but was baffled

on his way; and falling into the hands of a chief named Camelus, was delivered to Antonius and put to death. The blood of the assassin cemented the union between the Cæsarian leaders. Towards the end of October, Antonius, Lepidus, and Octavius met near Bononia, on a little island in the broad channel of the Rhenus, and there deliberated on the fate of the vanquished and the partition of the spoil. It was arranged, after three days' parley, that Octavius should resign the consulship in favour of Ventidius, an officer of the Antonian army, while, under the title of a triumvirate for the establishment of the commonwealth, the three chiefs should reign together over the city, the consuls, and the laws. They claimed the consular power in common for five years, with the right of appointing to all the magistracies. Their decrees were to have the force of law, without requiring the confirmation of the Senate or the people. Finally, they apportioned to themselves the provinces round Italy. The two Gauls fell to Antonius; the Spains, with the Narbonensis, to Lepidus; Africa and the islands to Octavius. Italy itself, with the seat of empire, they were to retain in common, while the eastern provinces, now held by Brutus and Cassius, they left for future division, when the enemy should be expelled from them. Meanwhile Octavius and Antonius, with twenty legions each, charged themselves with the conduct of the war, and agreed to leave Lepidus to maintain their combined interests in the city. Ample gratuities were promised to the soldiers, and estates assigned them from the lands of eighteen cities in the peninsula. The troops were satisfied with their share in the compact, and insisted that Octavius should espouse a daughter of Fulvia, as a pledge of its fulfilment.

The triumvirs now addressed an order to Pedius for the death of seventeen of their principal adversaries. The houses of the victims were attacked at night, and most of them slain before their condemnation was notified to the citizens. Pedius, a brave and honourable man, died from horror and disgust at the slaughter of which he was made the instrument. Octavius, Antonius, and Lepidus entered the city on three successive days, each accompanied by a single legion. The temples and towers were occupied by the troops; the banners of the conquerors waved in the forum, and cast their ominous shadow over the heads of the assembled people. A plebiscitum gave the semblance of legality to an usurpation which scarcely condescended to demand it. On November 27 the Triumvirate was proclaimed. The triumvirs, about to quit Rome to combat the murderers of Cæsar in the East, would leave no enemies

in their rear. They decreed, not a massacre like Sulla's, but a formal proscription. Sitting with a list of chief citizens before them, each picked out the names of the victims he personally required. Each purchased the right to proscribe a kinsman of his colleagues by surrendering one of his own. The fatal memorial was headed with the names of a brother of Lepidus, an uncle of Antonius, and a cousin of Octavius. Again were enacted the horrid scenes which closed the civil wars of the last generation. Centurions and soldiers were sent in quest of the most important victims. The pursuit was joined by mercenary cutthroats and private enemies. Slaves attacked their masters, and debtors their creditors. The heads of the proscribed were affixed to the rostra, but the triumvirs did not always pause to identify them.

Dreadful as these butcheries were, they seem at least to have fallen short in number of the exterminating massacres of Marius and Sulla. It is difficult to believe that the proscribed were in all cases hotly pursued. Cicero, one of the foremost on the list, travelled slowly from one of his villas to another, and was not overtaken till a month later. Many crossed the sea to Macedonia, others to Africa; still more took refuge on board the vessels with which Sextus Pompeius was cruising off the coast of Italy. Some escaped by bribery when entreaty failed; and Octavius seems in some instances to have studiously contrasted his own leniency with the ferocity of his associates. But Antonius demanded the death of Cicero, and Octavius, to the horror of all time, consented. Marcus Cicero was with his brother Quintus at his Tusculan villa. On the first news of the proscription they gained Astura, another of his villas, on a little island off the coast near Antium. From thence they proposed to embark for Macedonia. Quintus, indeed, was promptly seized and slain; but the surviving fugitive gained the sea, set sail, again landed, again embarked, and landed once more at Formiæ, in anguish of mind and perhaps of body also. In vain was he warned of the danger of delay. 'Let me die,' he replied, 'in my fatherland which I have so often saved.' But his slaves now shut their ears to their master's moans, placed him in his litter, and hurried towards the coast. Scarcely had the house been quitted when an officer named Popilius—a client, it was said, whose life Cicero had saved—approached and thundered at the closed doors. A traitor indicated the direction the fugitive had taken, and Cicero had not yet reached the beach when he saw the pursuers gaining upon him. His party were the more numerous, and would have

drawn in his defence, but he forbade them. He bade his slaves set down the litter, and, with his eyes fixed steadfastly on his murderers, offered his throat to the sword. Many covered their faces with their hands, and their agitated leader drew his blade thrice across it ere he could sever the head from the body. The bloody trophy was carried to Rome and set up by Antonius in front of the rostra. He openly exulted in the spectacle, and rewarded the assassins with profuse liberality. Fulvia, it is said, pierced the tongue with her needle, in revenge for the sarcasms it had uttered against both her husbands.

Such were the melancholy circumstances with which the year closed. Lepidus and Plancus, who entered upon the consulship on January 1, commanded the people, still full of mourning U.C. 712. and dismay, to celebrate the commencement of their reign B.C. 42. with mirth and festivity. They demanded also the honours of a triumph for victories, about which history is silent, in Gaul and Spain. Both the one and the other had sacrificed their own brothers in the proscription, and when the fratricides passed along in their chariots the soldiers, it is said, with the usual camp-licence, sang as they followed, 'The consuls triumph, not over the Gauls, but the Germans,' *i.e.* their brothers. The massacres had now ended, but a reign of confiscation commenced. All the inhabitants of Rome and Italy were required to lend a tenth of their fortune, and to give the whole of one year's income. The consuls proposed an oath to the citizens to observe all Cæsar's enactments, and accorded him divine honours. The triumvirs followed his example in assigning all the chief magistrates for several years forward. Octavius undertook to drive Sextus out of Sicily, where he had established himself under the protection of a flotilla manned by pirates and adventurers, but the passage of the straits was too strongly guarded. Antonius crossed without delay to the coast of Epirus.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Brutus recruits his legions at Athens—The poet Horace takes service with him—Brutus and Cassius prepare for war and plunder their own provinces for supplies—They encounter Antonius and Octavius in the two battles of Philippi in Macedonia—Their defeat and death—The triumvirs make a division of the empire—Octavius returns to Rome to plant the veterans on Italian land—Antonius repairs to the East, and falls into the snares of Cleopatra—The interview on the Cydnus—Fulvia raises a revolt in Italy against Octavius—War of Perusia—Treaty of Brundisium between Octavius and Antonius—Sextus obtains a share in the empire—Octavius undertakes a maritime war against Sextus—Excellent services of M. Agrippa—Victory off Naulochus—Death of Sextus and disgrace of Lepidus.—(B.C. 42–36.)

As soon as Cæsar had quitted Greece for Egypt the cities which had opened their gates to him were ready—such was their real indifference to the quarrels of their masters—to hail with equal loyalty the next claimant. Brutus on arriving in his province found the population outwardly republican. When he presented himself at Athens the citizens erected his statue by the side of Harmodius and Aristogiton. Athens was at this time a sort of university, at which many youthful patricians were attending the lectures of the philosophers. Associated with them, or dependent upon them, were other Italians of humbler pretensions, such as the future poet Horace, the son of a fiscal agent in Apulia. Many of these lads naturally joined the standard of the patriot, and were promoted perhaps to command in his ranks. Horace himself was made a tribune, of which officers there were properly six to each legion. We must suppose that the title was now conferred as an honorary distinction upon some striplings whom it would have been impossible to invest with any real authority. But the summons of Brutus was responded to by many tried veterans. The remnant of the Pompeian legions, dispersed through the country after Pharsalia, flocked around him. One agent of the government brought him the proceeds of the taxes, another officer supplied him with a contingent of horsemen, and the arsenal of Demetrias provided him with arms. On assuming command in the province of Macedonia the kings and rulers all around came over to him, and he was enabled quickly to overpower the adherents of the triumvirs, among whom was a brother of Antonius.

Cassius, as we have seen, had previously repaired to his pro-

mised government in Syria, where the courage with which he had repelled the Parthians after the fall of Crassus had gained him favour and respect. He too had encountered and suppressed the attempts of the Cæsarians. Cicero, who had caused Brutus and Cassius to be confirmed in their commands by the Senate, had urgently invoked their aid for the defence of the capital. They were both at the head of large forces; neither had any opponent to impede his march. With all the resources of the East at their command, we can hardly suppose that they were pressed for money. Most strange it must always seem that at such a crisis the liberators should have wanted energy to advance boldly into Italy and confront the triumvirs at the gates of Rome. Possibly they were not masters of their own soldiers. The legionaries did not care, perhaps, to engage in a bloody and profitless campaign against other legionaries as poor as themselves, while the cities of the East offered them such abundant resources. They found or provoked petty enemies around them, and required their chiefs to lead them against the Lycians, the Rhodians, and the Cappadócians, while the republic itself was falling into the hands of the Cæsarians. Brutus devoted himself to plundering the people at Xanthus, who threw themselves in despair into the flames of their own city. Cassius attacked Rhodes, mulcted it of 8,500 talents, and cut off the heads of fifty of its chief men. The whole of Asia was subjected to the severest exactions. At last Brutus himself, though hardly less guilty than his colleague, interfered to restrain this fatal cupidity. At Sardis, where the two proconsuls met to arrange the plan of the impending campaign, he sharply rebuked Cassius for bringing odium on their common cause; but Cassius pleaded his inability to restrain his followers, and Brutus let the matter pass with a few unavailing murmurs.

Laden with the plunder of Asia, the armies were about to pass over into Macedonia. The legend says that Brutus, watching in his tent at night, beheld a terrible figure standing silent before him. Addressed and questioned, the phantom replied, 'I am thy evil demon; thou shalt see me again at Philippi.' At daybreak the stoic related his vision to Cassius the Epicurean, who explained to him the principles on which his master demonstrated the vanity of apparitions. Brutus appeared to be satisfied, but his mind continued perhaps to brood over a presentiment of evil. Cassius was troubled with no misgivings. His troops were numerous and well-appointed, amounting to 30,000 foot and 20,000 horse; and as they advanced they received further auxiliary support before they encountered the

forces, still more numerous, but less well-supplied, of Antonius and Octavius, who had now joined his colleague. Brutus and Cassius were encamped on two eminences about twelve miles east of Philippi, their left covered by the sea, from which they drew their resources. Antonius posted himself opposite to Cassius; Octavius, on his left, faced the army of Brutus. Cassius, aware of the wants of the enemy, advised to refrain from action; but his associate, anxious and impatient to terminate at a blow the miseries of civil war, refused to listen to his counsels. The armies engaged at the same moment on either wing. Octavius was unwell and unable to take command of his division, which gave way under the shock of its opponents, and bore along its chief in its hurried flight. Brutus believed the battle won. But Antonius had charged with no less success on the right: Cassius had been driven from his camp, and had retired almost alone to a distance. Descrying from thence a body of horse advancing, he rashly concluded that the enemy was in pursuit, and threw himself on the sword of a freedman. The scout of Brutus, sent to advertise him of his comrade's success, arrived a moment too late.

The effect of this fatal deed was utterly disastrous. Cassius had at least controlled the turbulence of his soldiers, as one accustomed to command; but the mild student who now remained to soothe their shame and restore their confidence could neither restrain nor direct them. In vain did he scatter his treasures among them; in vain did he deliver his captives to their vindictive cruelty. Day by day they deserted his standards. Still the enemy, straitened for supplies, and conscious of having been half-defeated, was on the point of becoming disorganised. Could Brutus have refrained from another engagement, even yet a bloodless victory was in his hands. But his own fretful impatience was stimulated by the eagerness of the troops that still adhered to him; and after an interval of twenty days he resumed the battle of Philippi on the same ground. The field was well contested; but at the end of the day the Cæsarians had broken the ranks of their opponents, and Octavius assailed them in their camp. Brutus, with four legions, kept a position through the night on the neighbouring hills. The next day his men refused to fight, and he could only gain, with a few attendants, some hours of concealment, which he terminated by the blow of his own sword, when none of them would do him the last horrid service. The victors were now completely successful; and if the noblest of their foes had escaped them, many other private and public enemies fell

alive into their hands, on whom they did not scruple to satiate their vengeance. Antonius is said to have spared some, but Octavius is represented as more implacable. We know, however, that he pardoned Valerius Messala, a close friend of Brutus, and took him afterwards into favour. At a later time, indeed, he admitted several adherents of the beaten cause to his intimacy. Among them was Horace, the baffled enthusiast, who lived to jeer at himself for his recreant flight at Philippi.

The fleet which had attended on the progress of the republican armies carried off a remnant of the vanquished faction, which was content for the most part to take refuge with Sextus Pompeius and his piratical armaments. The victors now made a new partition of the empire, Octavius taking Spain and Numidia, Antonius Gaul beyond the Alps, together with Illyricum. The Cisalpine was for the first time combined with Italy itself, and the whole peninsula they held in common. To Lepidus they did not deign to grant any share of the plunder, alleging against him some covert intrigues with Sextus. At a later period they allowed him the small but important province of Africa. Octavius, still suffering in health, and pretending to seek repose, elected to return to Italy and undertake the ungracious task of planting the clamorous veterans on the estates of the native inhabitants. Antonius, more indulgent to himself, remained in the East, proposing to consolidate the conquests which his party had gained at Philippi, but throwing himself without restraint into the licentious habits of the most degraded subjects of the republic. Forgetting the claims of his greedy soldiers, he lavished upon himself and his parasites the treasures he amassed as he journeyed from city to city. Antonius was a coarse but easy-tempered man, and no flattery was too gross for him if seasoned with wit and boldness. None caught him more easily, none blinded him more effectually, none more coldly betrayed him, than the fascinating Cleopatra. He had seen and admired her in the train of his master Cæsar, and when he required her to meet him in Cilicia and answer for some imputed intrigues with his enemy Cassius, he had already perhaps destined her to be the instrument of his own pleasures. But Cleopatra was confident in her charms; her wit and address were far more remarkable, we are told, than even the beauty of her person. Steering for Tarsus, she sailed up the Cydnus in a gilded vessel, with purple sails and silver oars, to the sound of flutes and pipes. She reclined under an awning spangled with gold, in the garb of Venus, surrounded by Cupids, Graces, and Nereids. Antonius himself

had affected the character of Bacchus. The astonished natives hailed the happy conjunction of the two most genial of deities. Dazzled by her splendid equipage, he invited his visitor to land and sit at banquet with him, but she haughtily replied with a summons to him to attend upon herself. The first interview sealed his fate. For the rude triumvir Cleopatra discarded the elegance which had charmed the polished dictator; she sat through his drunken orgies, laughed at his camp jokes, and delighted him with saucy sallies of her own, till he forgot Rome and Fulvia and the Parthians, whom he was menacing with war, and consented to retire with her to Alexandria and lose the world in her arms.

While, however, Antonius was forgetting every public care and interest his wife and brother were declaring war in Italy against

U.C. 718. Octavius. At the commencement of the year 41 L.

B.C. 41. Antonius and Servilius had taken possession of the consulship. Fulvia, daring and ambitious, exercised over both an influence which rendered her actual mistress of the government, while the indolent Lepidus was completely eclipsed. The arrival of Octavius surprised and alarmed them. He had further irritated Fulvia by sending back her daughter Claudia, whom he had wedded the year before to satisfy the soldiers. Besides this she was mortified at the desertion of Antonius, and hoped to tear him away from Alexandria by raising commotions at home. She proceeded to foment the discontent of the proprietors who suffered by the assignment of lands to the veterans throughout eighteen districts in Italy. Some of these had taken up arms to defend their property; some had betaken themselves to predatory excesses; all complained and threatened. Octavius turned from the one class to the other, but could not satisfy both, and his soldiers were beginning to desert, till by borrowing from his followers and laying contribution on the treasures of the temples, he brought them back to his standards. Lucius had ventured to take up arms; Agrippa, the friend of Octavius, an able officer, shut him up in Perugia, and reduced him to capitulate by stress of famine. Octavius deemed it politic not only to spare his life but to send him with a petty command into Spain. No doubt his angry soldiers demanded the blood of some of their captives, but the story of the 'Aræ Perusinæ,' or sacrifice of 300 knights and senators to the shade of the dictator, is probably a fiction.

The cries of Fulvia and the din of the Perusian war had not been able to rouse Antonius from his dream of pleasure. The

vision, indeed, of reigning alone like Cæsar over the Roman world seems to have faded from before him. An attack of the Parthians, however, on Syria reminded him of the last enterprise on which his master had been bent, and the old Roman lust of conquest was stronger with him than the lust of empire. When at last he learnt the submission of Lucius, and the avowed adhesion to Octavius of Plancus and other powerful allies on whom he counted, he felt the necessity of confronting his rival in person, and demanding once more the full recognition of his own equal claim to authority in Rome. Despatching his able lieutenant Ventidius to make head against the Parthians, he repaired himself to Italy with some legions and a powerful fleet. At Athens he met his consort Fulvia, who upbraided him for abandoning his wife and friends; but he retorted more bitterly upon her, broke her spirit, and so possibly hastened her end, which promptly followed. Passing thence to the shores of the Adriatic, he made a compact with Sextus, who transported him across the straits, and proceeded to plunder in company with him the coast of Iapygia. The Romans regarded as an invader the man who with whatever specious cry assailed the sacred soil of Italy. In Sextus they had long ceased to recognise the son of their ancient favourite. To them he had become no better than a foreigner or barbarian; it was said that he had even forgotten the Latin tongue. Accordingly when Antonius availed himself of the aid of such an ally, and Octavius drew his sword to repel him, all their sympathies were enlisted on the side of their defender, the champion of their hearths and their gods. Thus were laid the foundations of the young Cæsar's popularity, upon which he was destined to rear the edifice of his imperial power. The soldiers, however, were at this moment stronger than the people, and disposed of their chiefs at their will. They now compelled Octavius and Antonius to treat. Cocceius Nerva, the mutual friend of both, arranged with Pollio and Mæcenæ the terms of a new alliance. A fresh partition of the world gave the East to Antonius, from the Adriatic to the Euphrates, where he was charged to defend the empire; the West to Octavius, with the conduct of the war against Sextus. Africa was now abandoned to Lepidus. Octavia, the sister of the young Cæsar, recently left a widow by Marcellus, married the widower Antonius. The rivals, thus outwardly reconciled, hastened to Rome together, and celebrated their alliance with games and festivities.

The treaty of Brundisium threw the centre of the empire into

the hands of the only statesman who could both curb its passions and sustain its dignity. Octavius repressed the mutinous dispositions of the soldiers. At the same time he kept Rome tranquil by regular distributions of grain. He consented to make overtures of reconciliation to Sextus, with whom he had connected himself by marriage with Scribonia. Sextus was now invited to confer with the triumvirs at Misenum, and the three islands of Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica were assigned to him as his share in the empire. He was only requested to clear the seas of the pirates, like his illustrious father, and like him restore to the city abundance and confidence. Sextus, on his part, betrothed his daughter to a nephew of Octavius. The three chiefs entertained one another at banquets; not on land, where the imperators might be too powerful, nor at sea, where the chief of the pirates could make himself master of his guests, but on board a vessel moored to the shore within the harbour. Nevertheless Mænas, an officer of Sextus, advised his chief to cut the cable and carry them out to sea, which Sextus sullenly forbade, muttering that his friend should have done the deed, but not have asked leave to do it. He had not, in fact, really divested himself of his hopes of empire. Sextus was the first and only Roman who sought to extort the supreme power at Rome by his maritime ascendancy. But he had renounced the manners and ideas of his countrymen. During his ten years' absence from Rome he had assumed the habits of a chief of banditti; his friends and officers were adventurers like himself, slaves, freedmen, and foreigners. He affected, it is said, to be the son of Neptune, and pretended to the attributes and honours of a demigod.

The alliance was too ill-assorted to be of long continuance. Sextus failed to restore some places he had taken on the coast of Italy. Antonius kept in pawn certain cities of Achaia on pretence that they owed him money. Octavius repudiated Scribonia in order to espouse Livia, of whom he seems to have been deeply enamoured, and whom he forced her husband, Tiberius Nero, to yield to him in her third month of pregnancy. Sextus was the first to arm his vessels and threaten the seaports, so that prices suddenly rose in the Roman market. Octavius summoned the triumvirs to his help. Lepidus promised assistance, but was slack in his preparations. Antonius, at the instance of Octavia, with whom he was consorting, came from Athens, and entered into counsel with his colleague at Tarentum. He furnished Octavius with 130 galleys, but demanded in return 20,000 legionaries for the Parthian war for which he was

preparing. Having made this exchange, and assumed the powers of the triumvirate for a second term of five years, they parted once more, Antonius leaving his wife with her brother, and speedily taking to himself his adored Cleopatra, Octavius declaring openly against Sextus, and securing by the treachery of Mænas both Sardinia and Corsica. With the aid of Mænas he soon assumed the offensive, but his attempts at sea were unsuccessful, till he was reinforced by the valiant and prudent Agrippa.

On the 1st of January, 37, M. Vipsanius Agrippa, after doing some good service for the commonwealth in Gaul, took possession of the consulship. To make head against Sextus, and wrest U.C. 717.
from him the command of the seas, he had to begin, like B.C. 37.
the old heroes of Rome in their first wars with Carthage, by creating a powerful marine. With this view he set to work at once to construct a secure and capacious harbour on the southern coast of Italy, which nature has denied it. He connected the lakes Avernus and Lucrinus between Misenum and Puteoli, admitting into them the waters of the Tyrrhene sea, and gave to this artificial roadstead the name of Julius in honour of his master. There he continued through the year to exercise his seamen, and with them the legionaries whom he meant to embark. In the ensuing spring he U.C. 718.
attacked Sicily at its three salient angles. Lepidus was to B.C. 36.
menace Lilybæum, Statilius Taurus to descend upon Pachynus, Octavius himself to assail Messana. These combinations were but partially and imperfectly carried out; but Sextus seems to have failed to meet them with vigour; and though Octavius himself was baffled and routed more than once, and Lepidus gave little assistance, the skill and energy of Agrippa at last gained him a decisive triumph. Sextus, defeated in the great sea-fight off Naulochus, and deserted on land by the remnant of the old Pompeian hosts, threw off his imperial mantle, collected his treasures, and abandoned Sicily for the East, where he still looked for an asylum from the favour or policy of Antonius. But the triumvir did not choose as yet to break with his colleague, and when the fugitive resorted once more impatiently to arms encountered and finally crushed him. At the same time Lepidus ventured to match himself with Octavius in Sicily; but he too was quickly overcome. Octavius felt himself strong enough to be merciful. He spared the Romans the horror they might have felt at the slaughter of one who was at the time chief pontiff, and contented himself with banishing him, as the most contemptible of his rivals. to Circeii. There the illustrious scion of

the great Æmilian house continued to hide himself more than twenty years. The feeble though faithless part he played in the great scenes around him has rendered his name a by-word in history; yet it must be remembered that Cæsar himself had advanced him to the highest offices, a distinction he may have owed to some other qualifications than mere rank and fortune.

CHAPTER L.

Octavius returns to Rome—His moderation and prudence acquire him popularity—Antonius invades Parthia—His disastrous retreat—His revels in Egypt and Syria—Successful campaign in Armenia—Octavius employs himself with warfare in the Alps and in Dalmatia—Antonius repulses Octavia—He makes great preparations for war, taking up his quarters at Samos—The treason of Antonius revealed in his testament—Octavius, supported by the sentiment of the Roman people, declares war against Egypt—Antonius collects his forces—Octavius contrives to land an army in Epirus—Desertions from the Antonian side—His losses by land and sea—Battle of Actium—Antonius flees to Egypt—Vain attempts at defence—Cleopatra betrays Antonius, who commits suicide—Death of Cleopatra—Egypt formed into a Roman province.

On the deposition of Lepidus his conqueror commanded not less than forty-five legions, 25,000 horsemen, and light troops to the number of 37,000. More than 500 galleys bore his victorious ensign. But the morning after a victory is often more to be feared than the day of combat by chiefs arrayed against the laws of their country. The soldiers, conscious of their strength, demanded no less rewards in lands and money than had been earned at Philippi. Octavius imposed severe exactions, especially upon Sicily, to raise the sums immediately required. On his return to Rome the Senate received him at the gates, and the people, rejoicing in the abundance that had followed upon his victory, attended him, crowned with flowers, to the Capitol. He waived with affected moderation the honours they would have heaped upon him, accepting only the tribunician inviolability, an ovation, and a golden statue inscribed 'To Cæsar, the restorer of peace by sea and land.' He declined to take from Lepidus the pontificate, which the laws had declared to be a perpetual office.

The fate of the usurper whose name he bore, and whose elevation he already rivalled, had made a deep impression on the mind of

Octavius. From the first, when surrounded by dubious friends and ill-disguised enemies, the preservation of his own life had been his most pressing care, and the caution and dissimulation he then learnt did not now abandon him when he seemed to touch the summit of his ambition. Even for the triumvirate he had affected to seek a legitimate sanction; nor did he ever suffer his most daring aggressions to lack this pretence of legality. Before re-entering the city he had read a discourse in which he rendered account to the people of all his 'acts,' and pleaded stern necessity in excuse for the proscriptions, while he gave assurances of peace and clemency for the future. He declared that he would abdicate with his colleague as soon as Antonius should have settled the quarrel with the Parthians. Meanwhile he restored their ancient prerogatives to the magistracies, and consigned the late anarchy to oblivion. The adroit administration of his friend Mæcenæ reconciled many enmities. Life and property were secured by the institution of a cohort of city guards. The whole peninsula was scoured by an active police, the strongholds of the banditti demolished, the factories on the estates of many great proprietors thrown open for the release of kidnapped freemen. The slaves whom Sextus had emancipated and enrolled in his battalions were restored to their masters where such could be found, or failing that were put to a cruel death as fugitives.

About midsummer of the year 36 Antonius had assembled 100,000 men on the Euphrates, with the avowed intention of completing the successes of his lieutenants Sosius and Ven-
 tidius against the Parthians. Cleopatra had joined him U.C. 718.
B.C. 36.
 on his way, but after a brief dalliance he directed her to return to Egypt, with the promise of joining her there at the close of a short and triumphant campaign. In the haste, however, with which he now moved, having too long delayed his advance, he suffered his machines to fall into the rear, and on reaching Praaspa, three hundred miles beyond the Tigris, he found himself destitute of the artillery requisite for a siege. He sat down to reduce the great city by blockade, but his own munitions were cut off by the Parthian horsemen, and on the desertion of some Armenian allies he was compelled to break up and make a hasty retreat. The cold weather was about to set in throughout the lofty regions into which he plunged. During a march of twenty-seven days the legions endured hardships unparalleled in their military annals. On crossing the Araxes the Parthians at length desisted from their attacks; but Antonius was still intent on regaining the festive halls of

Alexandria, and hurried his wearied soldiers along with great loss and suffering. He rejoined the queen in Syria, whither she had advanced to meet him, and returned with her unabashed to the pleasures of the Egyptian capital.

The ignominy of this shameful retreat might rival the disaster of Carrhæ; yet Antonius ventured to announce himself victorious. Octavius did not care to contest the claim, and affected to maintain a cordial understanding with him. The conduct of the virtuous Octavia was more sincere. Anxious to snatch him from the fatal influence by which he was enthralled, she obtained her brother's leave to rejoin him. Antonius had returned to Syria, and was preparing for a fresh expedition, when he learnt that his wife had already arrived at Athens. As Octavius had perhaps foreseen, he ordered her to advance no farther. Octavia easily divined the motive of this injurious message, but contented herself with asking leave to transmit the presents she was bearing to him. These consisted of clothing for his soldiers, beasts of burden, money, and equipments, together with a body of 2,000 picked men magnificently arrayed for the emperor's body-guard. Cleopatra was on the watch to frustrate these efforts of a fruitless affection, and by her malignant artifices prevailed on her lover to fly to her at Alexandria. Octavia returned with calm dignity to Rome, abandoning her reckless husband to the fate he merited. Antonius grew more and more insensible to the opinion of his countrymen. In the following year he made some inroads into Armenia, picked a quarrel with Artavasdes and carried him loaded with gilded chains to Alexandria. For these successes he awarded himself a triumph, which he celebrated, to the disgust of all Roman citizens, in the streets of his foreign capital.

A.U. 720.
B.C. 34.

The Egyptian court now plunged again into the grossest debauchery, the queen leading the way and contriving a succession of new pleasures for the Roman voluptuary. Her first object might be to wean him from his national ideas, and even to make it impossible for him to return as a citizen to Rome. For herself, however, she might aspire to plant her pavilion on the Tarpeian hill, and to dictate her will, as the poets sung, among the trophies of the patriot Marius. Meanwhile, to retain her grasp of her admirer as well as her seat upon the throne of the Ptolemies, she must keep him constantly occupied and constantly amused. Her personal talents were of the most varied kind: she was an admirable singer and musician; she was skilled in many languages, possessed of many intellectual

gifts as well as mistress of the lighter artifices of her sex. She pampered her lover's sensual appetites and stimulated his flagging interests with ingenious surprises; sending divers, as we read, to fasten salt fish to the bait of his angling-rod, and dissolving in a cup of vinegar a pearl of inestimable value. Painters and sculptors were charged to group the illustrious pair together, and the coins of her kingdom bore the effigies and titles of both conjointly. The Roman legionary, with the name of Cleopatra inscribed upon his shield, found himself transformed into a Macedonian bodyguard. Masques were represented at court in which the versatile Plancus sank into the character of a stage buffoon, and enacted the part of the sea-god Glaucus, while the princely lovers arrayed themselves as Isis and Osiris.

The first months of the year 33 thus passed away at Alexandria amidst licentious orgies, the rumour of which caused much resentment at Rome, where the popularity of Octavius was A.U. 721. steadily rising. The heir of the dictator was beginning to B.C. 33. fill in the public eye the space left vacant by his father's death. His manners were affable, his concern for the public weal unwearied, and even the pretence he still maintained of amity towards an unworthy colleague seemed amiable and graceful. After the reduction of Sicily he had devoted himself to the establishment of a mild but firm administration at Rome; in the following year he had engaged the Salassi and Taurisci amidst the rudest passes of the Alps, had defeated the Liburni and Japydes in Dalmatia, and the Pannonians on the waters of the Save. At the end of three campaigns a rising of the Illyrian tribes was effectually quelled, and their country annexed to the empire. Octavius, whose weak health had sometimes kept him from the field at an important crisis, and whose personal courage had fallen under suspicion, obtained in these wars the distinction of an honourable wound. The Senate decreed him a triumph, but he deferred its celebration to a later period. Already, at the beginning of 33, the rivals had entered upon angry recriminations, Antonius objecting that he had not received the share of troops and provinces promised him on the deprivation of Lepidus, while Octavius retorted by charging him with the murder of Sextus and the captivity of Artavasdes, an ally of the republic. Nor did he fail to upbraid him with his scandalous connexion with the Egyptian queen, and his acknowledging her child Cæsario as a genuine son of the dictator. Antonius had been making preparations for an attack on the Parthians, but he now quickly returned from a desultory

foray within their borders, and appointed all his legions to come together at Ephesus. There also he summoned his auxiliaries and allies. His officers levied fresh battalions among the subjects of the republic in Greece, Africa, and Asia, and the aid of the barbarians from the Syrtis to the Caspian was invoked to swell the multitude of many colours, arms, and languages assembled under his banners. Cleopatra appeared herself at his musters, attended by an Egyptian contingent, but she sent him also a numerous fleet; her galleys were celebrated for their size and for the weight of their artillery; and these combined with the maritime resources of all the Eastern Mediterranean to form the largest naval armament that had perhaps ever been launched upon its waters. Yet the real object of these preparations was still unavowed. Antonius pretended to be absorbed in his accustomed frivolities. He passed the winter at Samos among musicians and dancers. The resources which should have been husbanded for the approaching contest were lavished on a splendid Dionysian festival, and the new Bacchus, as he allowed himself to be represented, repeated the extravagances of former years, while the empire of the world was trembling in the balance.

The consuls for 32 were Domitius Ahenobarbus and Sosius, both of them adherents of Antonius, and appointed to their office according to the agreement still existing between him and his colleague. But this advantage was speedily counterbalanced by the defection of some of his chief supporters, who augured ill of a cause sustained so feebly. Plancus, who had consented to degrade himself for the amusement of the court of Alexandria, reappeared in the Senate and declared his disgust at the delinquencies of his late patron. He betrayed to Octavius the testament of Antonius, which he was charged to deposit in the custody of the Vestal Virgins. It appeared that the renegade triumvir had acknowledged the legitimacy of Cæsar's foul union with the foreigner; he had declared Cæsario the heir of the dictator; he had solemnly ratified his own drunken donations of crowns and provinces to his bastards; finally, he had directed that his body should be entombed with Cleopatra's in the mausoleum of the Ptolemies. When these amazing facts were made known none dared distrust the rumours which prevailed, that he had pledged the queen in his cups to sacrifice the West to her ambition, and remove to Alexandria the government of the world—to prostrate the gods of the Capitol before the monsters of the Nile. Octavius cast his eyes on the ground and listened with suppressed exultation to the general acclaim which greeted

A.U. 722.
B.C. 32.

himself as the true champion of the nation, the asserter of its principles, and the defender of its faith. The consuls quitted the city in which, as partisans of Antonius, they found themselves ill at ease. Nevertheless Octavius still refrained from declaring him a 'public enemy.' It was enough to proclaim war against Egypt. The term of the triumvirate had expired and he did not renew it. He directed the Senate to annul the appointment of Anto-
U.C. 723.
B.C. 31.
 nius to the consulship, and assumed it himself with Messala
 at the beginning of 31. At such a crisis the legitimate office was more effective, as it had always been more popular, than any extraordinary commission.

Even the nobles who repaired at this moment to the side of Antonius entreated him to dismiss Cleopatra, and reduce the impending struggle to a personal contest between himself and his rival. He replied by divorcing his legitimate wife, and thus breaking the last legal tie which bound him to his country. Preparations for war were pushed forward eagerly on both sides. Antonius had 100,000 infantry and 12,000 horse. The kings of Mauretania, of Commagene and Cappadocia, Paphlagonia and Cilicia followed his banners in person. Many other great potentates had sent him men and money. His fleet counted 500 large war-galleys, some of them with eight or even ten banks of oars. The forces of Octavius were inferior in number, amounting to 80,000 infantry, 12,000 cavalry, with only 150 vessels of a smaller but really more manageable class. Antonius had adopted Patræ, in the Peloponnesus, for his winter quarters, but, for the better support of his vast armies, he had dispersed them along the coast of the Ionian. Meanwhile his navy suffered from sickness and inaction. The straits of the Adriatic were left unguarded, and Agrippa, a skilful commander at sea, seized the opportunity of covering the transport of the Octavian forces into Epirus. From that moment defection commenced in the ranks on the other side. Domitius gave the signal of desertion, and the princes of Asia followed in quick succession. Antonius fancied himself surrounded by traitors. He distrusted Cleopatra herself, and required her to taste in his company all the viands that were set before him.

The defection of individuals was quickly followed by the defeat of detachments. Sosius made an unsuccessful attack on Agrippa's galleys, and Antonius himself was worsted in a skirmish with the land forces of Octavius. The two vast armies had been gradually concentrated in front of each other, on the shores of the gulf of

Ambracia, with a narrow channel between them, which was occupied by the fleets of Antonius. The position of his camp was confined and unhealthy, and the superiority the enemy had acquired at sea already straitened its supplies. Antonius would have removed the theatre of war to the plains of Thessaly, and decided the inheritance of Cæsar on the field of Pharsalia. But Cleopatra, fearing for her own means of retreat, dissuaded him from this project. To his challenge to single combat Octavius returned a contemptuous refusal. Already did Antonius despair of victory either by sea or land. He prepared for flight, and was about to lead his fleet into the open waters of the Leucadian bay, with the intention, carefully disguised, of breaking through the enemy's line and spreading sail for Egypt, leaving the army to retreat as it best might into Asia. The Cæsarians watched these operations, and made ready for the encounter.

For several days the agitation of the sea would not allow the ships of either party to move. At last, on September 2, the wind
U.C. 723.
B.C. 31. fell, and the Antonian galleys remained till midday becalmed at the entrance of the straits. At that hour a light breeze sprang up, and the mighty armament issued forth into the open sea. But the huge hulks of Antonius were ill-adapted either for advance or retreat. They were protected, but at the same time encumbered, by bulky frames of timber, and the fragile triremes of Octavius dared not strike them either in front or flank. They hurled massive stones from their wooden towers, and thrust forth ponderous irons to grapple the unwary assailant. But the Cæsarian galleys came to the attack with agile and dexterous manœuvres. Their well-trained rowers bore up and backed alternately, or swept away the banks of the enemy's oars, under cover of a shower of arrows. They scudded round the unwieldy masses, distracting the attention of their defenders, and protecting each other in turn from grappling and boarding. The combat was animated but indecisive. The Liburnian galleys of Octavius, the light cavalry of the seas, crippled but could not destroy the stedfast phalanxes opposed to them. But while the unmanageable barges of Antonius rolled heavily on the water, incapable of attacking their pigmy assailants, suddenly Cleopatra's galley, anchored in the rear, hoisted its sails and threaded the maze of combatants, followed by the Egyptian squadron of sixty barks. When Antonius himself, observing the appointed signal, leapt into a boat and hastened in their wake, the rage and shame of his adherents filled them with despair. Many

tore down their turrets and threw them into the sea to lighten their vessels for flight. Nevertheless the struggle was still arduous; shattered and disabled as those floating masses were, it was impossible to sink or disarm them until fire was employed. Torches were hurled into them, piles of combustibles driven against them; one by one they took fire, burnt to the water's edge, and sank slowly in the ocean. Three hundred galleys were captured. The army on shore was still unharmed, and refused for a time to believe in its chief's faintheartedness. It was not till Canidius himself, who commanded it, abandoned his camp for the quarters of Octavius that the gallant legions could be induced to make their submission.

The spot on which the Antonian army was encamped faced the scene of the encounter, and was marked by a little chapel of Apollo, called the Actium, from the point of land or *acte* on which it stood. Here Octavius subsequently instituted the festival of the 'Actian games,' to recur every fifth year, a solemnity which was respectfully observed for many generations. From this place the great battle which decided the fate of Rome and of the world derived its illustrious appellation. Having destroyed the fleet and taken possession of the army of his adversary, he had nothing more to fear from the minion of Cleopatra. The punishment of the foreign foe could be safely deferred, and the victor of Actium was anxious to secure the fruits of his success—the fidelity of Rome and the submission of the provinces. He had left Mæcenas to govern the city in his absence; he now deputed to Agrippa the control of the disturbing forces which still agitated Italy. He proceeded himself to visit Greece, and received from its people, who had suffered under his rival's exactions, a hearty welcome. From thence he passed into Asia, where provinces and dependent kingdoms promptly submitted to him. He proposed to pass the winter in Samos, to set the affairs of the East in order with due deliberation, but in the winter of 30 he returned to Italy. Knights and senators, followed by a multitude of the citizens, came forth to Brundisium to receive him. He listened graciously to the complaints of his veterans, sold his own effects and those of his nearest friends to satisfy them, planted new colonies in the territory of hostile cities, and finally promised an ample donative from the spoils of Egypt. With the beginning of spring he was again in a condition to follow in the track of the fugitives.

Antonius and Cleopatra had traversed the sea in the same vessel, and reached Parætonium, where the Roman general demanded the

obedience of the small body of troops that formed its garrison. The queen proceeded direct to Alexandria, and entered the harbour with her galley decked with laurels, for fear of a revolt of the people. Meanwhile Antonius had been repulsed by the legionaries, and had learnt the fate of his army at Actium. Despair at once overcame him, and, coward as he had become, he could scarcely be held from killing himself. Dragged by his attendants to Alexandria, he there found Cleopatra preparing with masculine energy to defend herself. She had murdered the chiefs whom she could not trust, and enriched the soldiers till she thought she could trust them. But day by day arrived tidings of fresh defections. All the princes of Asia abandoned the falling cause. Herod, the king of the Jews, offered to open his country to the legions of the conqueror. Some gladiators, whom Antonius had left at Cyzicus, alone remained faithful to him. They traversed Asia and Syria, cutting their way through the enemies who would have detained them, and only yielded at last on a false rumour of their master's death. Then it was that Cleopatra proposed to fly into the distant region of Arabia, and commenced the transport of her galleys from the Nile to the Red Sea. But some of these vessels were destroyed by the barbarians on the coast, and the design was hastily abandoned. A second project, still wilder than the first, was to seek an asylum in Spain, and raise that turbulent province against the heir of Cæsar. When this scheme was relinquished Antonius shut himself up in a tower on the sea-coast; but Cleopatra still meditated resistance, and presented her youthful son to the people, arrayed in the garb of manhood, that they might still feel themselves governed by a man and not by a woman. Presently her wretched lover crept back to his mistress, and plunged with her into reckless orgies till the moment should arrive for both perishing together. Cleopatra, it is said, made experiments of all kinds of poison on slaves and criminals, till she assured herself that the bite of the asp is the most painless agent of destruction.

At the same time, however, both the one and the other demanded grace for themselves separately of the victor. To Antonius no answer was vouchsafed; but Cleopatra was informed that she might obtain reasonable terms if she would kill or drive away her paramour. Octavius, indeed, was playing with her despair. He was fully resolved to make her kingdom his own, but he wished to carry the detested foreigner alive to Rome, and exhibit her at his triumph. He might be anxious moreover to secure the treasures of the

Ptolemies, which she had it in her power to secrete or destroy. His agents suggested to her that Octavius was young and inexperienced, and might not be insensible to the charms which had been so powerful with Julius and Antonius; and she, it seems, still indulging the hope of a last conquest, encouraged her lover to prepare for a final struggle, while she was secretly contriving to betray and disarm him. Antonius, indeed, continued to urge his solicitations. Octavius still refused to reply to them, and drew rapidly nearer. Pelusium fell before the invader; but Antonius gained the advantage in an affair before the walls of Alexandria. He was about to seize the moment for fighting, or perhaps for flight by sea, when he beheld his own vessels, seduced by the artifices of Cleopatra, pass over suddenly to the enemy. At the same moment, and perhaps by the same treachery, the last of his cohorts deserted him. The queen had shut herself up in a tower constructed for her mausoleum. Fearing the violence of the man she had ruined, she caused him to be informed that she had committed suicide. All was now over with Antonius, and he resolved himself to die. With the aid of his freedman Eros he inflicted upon himself a mortal wound; but while yet living he learnt that she too was still alive, and causing himself to be brought to the foot of her tower, was drawn up by her, with the aid of two women, her sole attendants, and expired in her arms.

Meanwhile Octavius had entered Alexandria. He charged an officer to secure the queen alive. Cleopatra refused him admittance, but he contrived to scale the tower unperceived and effect an entry. She made as if she would strike herself with a poniard; he arrested her arm, and assured her of his master's kindness. After further parley she suffered herself to be led to the palace, where she resumed her state, and received recognition as a sovereign from the victor. Octavius proposed to visit her. Attired with studied negligence, and with all the outward marks of distress and humiliation, she awaited his coming. Her apartment was decorated with busts of the great Julius, and she made display of his letters and love-tokens. Her words and gestures were elaborately directed to excite his compassion, and lead the way to a feeling still more tender. Against these sorceries Octavius sternly fortified himself. He kept his eyes fixed on the ground, and replied with coldness and self-possession. He demanded the list of her treasures, and, bidding her be of good courage, quitted her presence. Cleopatra was dismayed at her failure, but it was not till informed that she was certainly destined to be removed to Rome that she resolved to die. Retiring

to her mausoleum, where lay the body of Antonius, she crowned his tomb with flowers, and was found the next morning dead on her couch, her two women expiring at her side. 'Is this well?' exclaimed the affrighted emissary of Octavius. 'It is well,' replied the dying Charmion, 'and worthy of the daughter of kings.' The manner of her death was never certainly known. At the triumph of Octavius, thus deprived of the ornament of her living presence, her image was carried on a bier, the arms encircled by two serpents, which served to confirm the popular rumour that she had perished by the bite of an asp, brought her for the purpose concealed in a basket of figs. Her child by Julius was cruelly put to death—Octavius could suffer no such rival for the inheritance to exist; but the offspring of Antonius were spared, though deprived of their royal succession. The dynasty of the Ptolemies ceased to reign. Egypt was reduced to the form of a province.

The fall of Antonius brings to an end the period of the civil wars. The struggles of Tiberius and Scipio, of Caius and Oppianus, of Metellus and Saturninus, of Drusus and Philippus, of Marius and Sulla, of Cæsar and Pompeius, of Octavius, Brutus, Sextus, and Antonius, have at last subsided in the exhaustion of the commonwealth, and the unquestioned triumph of the last survivor. The hour has at length arrived for the submission of both nobles and people to the yoke impending over them for a hundred years. But if the hour has arrived so has the man also. Octavius and his epoch are made for each other. At no other period could he have fixed the monarchy on an immovable basis; but even at that era none but himself could have thus fixed it. The success of his rival at Actium could only have given the victim a few years of reckless enjoyment at Rome; his empire, debased and denationalised, would have been torn in pieces by his children or his lieutenants. But the pre-eminent genius of Octavius is attested by the permanence of the edifice he erected. The creations of his hand were rooted in the ancient ideas and habits of the people themselves. We have traced the views of Cæsar and Sulla in their crude legislation, and seen how baseless were the fabrics of their ambition, and how quickly they collapsed and perished. We must now examine the system adopted by the real founder of the Roman empire, which endured in its main features for more than two centuries, and continued to animate with its principle the governments of Rome and Constantinople down to the commencement of modern history, if, indeed, it can be said to be even yet extinguished.

CHAPTER LI.

Octavius returns to Rome B.C. 29, and celebrates a triple triumph—He assumes :

1. The military command-in-chief, with the title of Imperator prefixed to his name.
2. The functions of the Censorship, but without the title.
3. The Principate, or first place in the Senate.
4. The Potestas Consularis in the city and the provinces; division of Imperial and Senatorial provinces.
5. The Potestas Tribunicia.
6. The Sovereign Pontificate.
7. The name of Augustus—He is worshipped in the provinces—His moderation in the extension of the Roman franchise—The policy of Augustus compared with that of Julius Cæsar—Ethical schools of the day—Augustus repudiates all speculative opinions—Cosmopolitan tendency of the era exemplified in language, law, and religion—Augustus leans against this tendency, and makes common cause with the Senate and nobles—The Romans reconciled to monarchical government—The emperor's simplicity of manners—The poets of the court contribute to make him popular.—The Senate and People concur in hailing him as 'Father of his country.'

AFTER regulating his new province Octavius made a progress through his Eastern dominions, rewarding his allies and dispossessing his enemies; and when these affairs were settled he still permitted himself to pass the winter in the pleasant retirement of Samos. He might wish some interval to elapse to allow the stain of his proscriptions to fade from recollection, and that he might seem to return to Rome as a proconsul victorious over foreign enemies. When at last he reached the city, in the middle U.C. 725. of 29, he was hailed with the most fervid acclamations. He B.C. 29. must now determine whether he would elect to be a citizen of the commonwealth, or its ruler. The framework of the constitution still existed entire; the Senate still possessed the wide-extended sphere of its dominion, and the people continued to exercise their sovereign prerogatives. Octavius himself still recognised this paramount authority, professing hitherto to wield only delegated powers. He had laid down the extraordinary powers of the triumvirate; it was as consul commissioned by the state that he had conquered at Actium and subjugated Egypt. His acts in Greece and Asia awaited the confirmation of the Senate. So moderate and loyal as he seemed, his popularity could not fail to be unbounded.

The ceremony of a triple triumph, together with the shows which accompanied it, had reached its termination, but the imperator continued to stand at the head of the legions which had followed his car. According to the laws of the free-state the imperator must now disband his army, for with the triumph his imperium had become extinct. But he evaded this necessity. Octavius allowed

the Senate, all too prone to flatter and caress him, to give him the title of Imperator in the same sense in which it had been conferred upon Julius Cæsar, and prefix it to his name, whereby he became permanent commander of the national forces, and every officer fell into the position of his lieutenant. The ordinary command ceased the moment the emperor crossed the lines of the pomerium. Before the gates of the city he exchanged the *sagum* for the *toga*. An exception to this rule was admitted on the day of the triumph only. But Octavius obtained, as chief in command, or Emperor, the right of bearing even in the city the sword, the ensign of military power, and the cloak. He cautiously refrained, indeed, from the assumption of this prerogative, and his example in this respect became a rule with his successors. They generally relinquished even the formal title of Imperator in their ordinary intercourse with their subjects, and professed to be 'masters of their slaves, commanders of their soldiers, and princes or premiers of the citizens.'

Having thus secured to himself the army, the instrument of substantial power, Octavius sought to disguise the real foundation of his authority by raising the estimation of the Senate as the representative of the national will. With this view he caused himself to be invested with the powers of the censorship. As censor he revised the list of senators, and ejected many whom he considered unworthy in origin or fortune to fill the highest order in the state. We have seen how Julius Cæsar had degraded the Senate by thrusting into it foreigners and men of low condition; the triumvirs had followed the same policy, and the losses of war and proscriptions had been recently replaced by a crowd of their clients and retainers. The servility of this mongrel assembly had excited much disgust, and Octavius was well-inclined to retrace his steps. He reduced the numbers, swelled by Antonius to a thousand, to the legitimate limits of six hundred, and required strictly a qualification of property. Into the equestrian order he made similar inquisition: he introduced many new houses into the patrician class, which he supplied with sufficient means by inventing for them a vast number of administrative employments.

Upon the Senate thus remodelled Octavius conferred additional dignity by placing himself at its head as *Princeps*, a republican title, which, while it implied no substantial power, was nevertheless regarded as the highest of all honorary distinctions. This purely civil dignity had always been held for life, and accordingly Octavius

accepted it in perpetuity. The functions of the censorship, but without the formal title, he demanded for five years only, though he allowed them to be repeatedly renewed to him. The military command he speedily offered to resign, and, after a long affectation of resistance, only accepted it for a period of ten years, a term which he also allowed to be afterwards repeatedly renewed. He had held the consulship for many years successively, but this title he ultimately renounced while he retained its *powers*. Invested with the 'Potestas Consularis,' he occupied the highest place in the city, and continued to be recognised as the chief of the State, the head of both its legislative and executive departments, the organ of its foreign relations. The Romans had been wont to remark that their consul was in fact a king, constitutionally checked by the presence of a colleague, and by the limited term of his office. Octavius, however, taking the place of pre-eminence between the actual consuls, was no longer restrained by their subordinate authority; while, the power being conferred on him for life, he became, though reigning under the forms of a republic, the real king of the Romans. When the consul quitted his post in the city he carried with him into the provinces the same supreme authority which he had before wielded at Rome. But Octavius claimed proconsular authority together with the consular. As imperator he had divided with the Senate the direct administration of the provinces, choosing for his own all those in which large armies were maintained for the repression either of turbulent subjects or of aggressive enemies. But his proconsular authority was extended over the whole empire; and though he continued ordinarily to allow the Senate to nominate the governors of the districts assigned to it, he gave it to understand that the powers with which it had invested him were actually paramount to its own even there also. The circle of the imperial prerogative was completed by the acquisition of the powers of the tribunate. This Potestas was also declared perpetual, though it was nominally renewed from year to year; and by these annual renewals both Octavius and his successors long continued to date the length of their reigns. The chief value of this cherished prerogative lay in the popularity of its name. The populace of the city still persisted in regarding the tribunate as the legitimate guardian of its peculiar privileges, and when they saw their new master invested for life with this pledge of their liberties they refused to believe that they were really his slaves. When Octavius, after the death of Lepidus, assumed the dignity of sovereign pontiff,

and therewith the administration of the national cult, they were assured that their chosen champion would not exercise it as a political engine against their own prerogatives, and the nation beheld him, without fear or jealousy, combine in his single hand the most invidious instruments both of patrician tyranny and plebeian independence.

Nevertheless, while he was successively amassing these prerogatives, Octavius discreetly waived every recognised designation of the sovereign power which they actually involved. Antonius had abolished the dictatorship, and his successor in Cæsar's inheritance refrained from reviving it. No voice was allowed to hail the new Cæsar with the title of 'King.' Yet Octavius was not insensible to the value of distinctive titles. Some of his counsellors, to whom his secret wishes were communicated, suggested to him the name of Quirinus or Romulus. But the one was a god; the other was a king who had been slain as a tyrant. To the epithet 'Augustus,' which was next proposed, no objection could be advanced. The name was intact; it had been borne by no man before; and Octavius required no historical associations to recommend his personal qualifications. But the adjunct, though never given to man, had been applied to things most noble, most venerable, and even divine. The rites of the gods were called 'august,' their temples were 'august;' the word itself was derived from the holy 'auguries,' by which the divine will was revealed; it was connected with the favour and 'authority' of Jove himself. And courtly poets could play still further upon it, and pray for the Roman commander that he might 'increase' in years and 'increase' in power. The worship of Octavius as a god was spreading tacitly in the provinces; though forbidden in Italy and the city, it was already foreshadowed by the flattery of orators and poets, and the name of Augustus gave force to the national sentiment and impelled the propensity to adulation. Meanwhile the common accents of the people continued to hail him as the first citizen of the republic, the father of his country, the restorer or last founder of the state.

The attempt has been often made to show, from the notices we have received of the policy of Julius Cæsar, that he had conceived a definite idea of the government he proposed to establish in Rome. Undoubtedly circumstances are not wanting which point to certain principles of administrative policy, and it must be always held to be possible that, if his career had been prolonged, he might have actually modelled the empire of Rome accordingly. It has been

surmised that he was prepared to lay down the lines of an avowed autocracy, to mould the whole mass of the citizens and the subjects of Rome into one body politic under the sway of a single sovereign. The history indeed of the Grecian world had been rife for centuries with the substitution of royal for republican institutions, and such might well appear to all thinking men to be the natural end to which all civilised societies must incline. Nor was Cæsar the man to entertain any fear of the personal consequences which such a revolution at Rome might entail upon himself. He might hesitate as to the fitting moment to strike a blow, but assuredly no scruple or prejudice would have hindered him from seizing on the opportunity when it offered. Cæsar was not less devoid of the common prejudices of his countrymen in regard to national pride. No sentiment would have prevented him from carrying out to the uttermost the policy of enfranchising the provinces, and transforming the subjects of the empire into citizens throughout the world, a policy which he had actually adopted in regard to the Transpadanes and many Gaulish and other communities. Whether he revolved in his mind the idea of extending the boon of citizenship more generally, and effecting an uniformity of political privileges in Italy and the provinces, must be always open to conjecture. To fuse all the nationalities of the empire into one, and blend together the manners and customs and laws of the East and the West, the North and the South, in one homogeneous system, might be an undertaking not too broad and liberal for the eagle eye and iron hand of the great dictator; but if we ever lend ourselves for a moment to the fascination of conceiving that so great a man was not incapable of so great a project, our speculations are sorely thwarted by the plain fact that he did actually suffer himself to be diverted from his imperial schemes, whatever their extent, by the paltry object of snatching some lost standards from the Parthians, and plunging into an expedition with a view to indefinite and useless conquests.

Possibly the best criterion of the actual plans of Julius Cæsar may be found by examining the principles of the government established by his successor. But from these last we must argue, not directly, but rather inversely to the former. The policy of Octavius—or, passing over his second designation of Octavianus, of Augustus Cæsar—may be taken to be very nearly the opposite of that of his uncle the dictator. The care with which the younger usurper shielded all the personal prerogatives he accepted under the

forms and titles of the free state, may indicate his sense of the impolicy of the elder in seizing upon the kingly rule without disguise or extenuation. Cæsar fell because he allowed the mere title of king to be dangled before him; but Augustus knew, and the Roman world was profoundly convinced, that Cæsar meant to be a king. Thus much we may infer from the contrary policy he displayed himself. We may further remark that Augustus was studiously temperate in allowing the extension of the Roman franchise to the provincials. Whatever may have been the pressure of such external claims upon him, he steadily refused to gratify them. He insisted in the strongest terms on the superior character and privileges of the Romans, 'the rulers of the world, the nation of the gown,' and piqued himself on gratifying their pride by keeping them a nation apart from all the rest, the born sovereigns of mankind around them. In doing this he undoubtedly opposed the living principle of the world around him. Not merely might individuals and communities aspire to the distinctions and the exemptions incident to Roman citizenship; the blending of races together was, at this epoch, the natural aspiration of all thinking men, enlightened by the speculations of the greatest sages of the world since the time of Alexander; it was urged by the daily wants of all people and classes, to whom a common law and common social rights were an object of pressing necessity.

But Augustus, ever haunted by the fear of a blow like that of Brutus, and conceiving, we may believe, that the enmity of Brutus, and of the Senate and people which acted by him, had been mainly engendered by national jealousy, shrank from the policy to which Cæsar had so plainly lent himself, and studiously paraded before his subjects the contrary policy of foreign and provincial repression. In this, as in other things, Augustus, it may be believed, wished to institute a reaction against the impulses which Cæsar so importunately urged forward. The system of Augustus was meant to counteract the tendencies of the Marian and Cæsarian eras. But this again must be understood with some discrimination. The second Cæsar was nominally at least the child of the popular party, the representative of popular ideas; he could not altogether repudiate them, or abdicate the position of popular champion in which these ideas had placed him. But the exact colour of his system, which had shifted its hues during his early career, seems to have been definitively fixed from the day when, arrayed against the foreign forces of his rival, Antonius, he came forth, at the head of the

Senate, the people, and the gods of Rome, as the champion of the whole nation, without respect of class or party.

Cæsar and his nearest associates, together with a majority of the cultivated intellects of the day, had been of the Epicurean persuasion in matters of ethical speculation; Brutus and Cato, with a small number of choicer spirits, had proclaimed themselves Stoics; Cicero led a still smaller section who professed to hold a middle way, combining or discriminating between both opinions. Of Octavius it is specially remarked that he repudiated such speculation altogether, and derided the ideologists who were not content, as he was himself, with taking the material world as he found it, and putting it to its practical uses. In this profession or rather negation of belief, there was a positive significance. All the schools of philosophy combined in this, that, derived as they were from their parent source in the lucubrations of Plato, they all tended to regard men as naturally equal, of common origin, common aspirations, common rights. To this general view, first faintly shadowed forth by the great sage of republican Athens, a vast impulse had been given by the worldwide conquests of Alexander, which first taught civilised men to look beyond their own narrow homes and contracted interests, and embrace at one view the universal brotherhood of man. From the time of the great Macedonian conquests this pregnant idea had become more and more prolific. The diffusion of the Greek language as the common vehicle of precise and cultivated thought, had bound together the denizens of every city on the Mediterranean, from Antioch to Gades, and had penetrated far into the interior of the three continents. At Rome all education was founded upon the study of Hellenic models, and the masters of the Hellenic intellect had acquired complete dominion over the upper classes of society. The Roman literature had condescended to dress itself after the fashion of the poets and historians of Attica and Ionia. The Latin language, indeed, had been imposed upon the subjects of the empire in every province. All the acts of the government were notified in Latin, to which the Greek or the vernacular idiom might be appended only as a translation; but this practice, too, had tended to bind the nations together, and bid them all look to a common head or centre. The Roman law had been extended into the provinces by the agency of the prætors and proconsuls, and had received no slight modification itself from the usages of the peoples upon whom it had been partially imposed. The ancient principles of the Roman connubium and of quiritary property

were continually sapped by the influence of foreign institutions, more in harmony with the advancing cultivation and humanity of the age. Most of all were the religious ideas of the old Roman people assailed and undermined by the conflicting superstitions of the world around them. In vain had Rome attempted for two centuries to ward off the attacks of the foreign neologists by pretending to interpret her own mythology and ritual in accordance with the ideas of her subjects around her. The Greeks, the Egyptians, the Syrians, and even the Jews demanded the full recognition of their own creeds and religious usages. The metropolis of the world had become the common receptacle of all existing beliefs and ceremonials.

We are assured, as has been already stated, that Cæsar had contemplated a codification of Roman law, which seems to mean the harmonizing of the old municipal law of the republic with the usage which had been forced upon it by the pressure of external jurisprudence. He did not live to lay even the first lines of the great work which he may have conceived in his mind. Augustus shrank from carrying it into execution, and seems even studiously to have repressed it. It was the aim of the second Cæsar to maintain the old law as far as it could be maintained; to defend it from foreign incursions, and glorify it as the true source of Roman greatness. Throughout the reign of Augustus the two principles struggled for supremacy. There arose two schools of Roman lawyers, the conservative and the liberal; but the influence of the emperor seems to have been steadily thrown in the conservative scale. Julius had been liberal, and Julius was assassinated; his successor marked and carefully shunned his footsteps. Nor can we doubt that Julius, a man of no definite belief but the slave of many undefined superstitions, was something more than a passive spectator of the great battle of the Pagan religions which was raging around him. If Augustus regarded his predecessor as a favourer of the general dissolution of fixed creeds, he would be the more inclined himself to lend all his weight to the support of the old national traditions. Accordingly he threw himself resolutely on the task of reviving the religion of Rome. He repaired the crumbling temples, revived the priesthoods, and renewed the earliest usages of the republic. The restoration of the ancient fanes, and the addition of many new ones, must have thrown an air of renovated splendour over the city. The *Fasti* of the court poet, Ovid, setting forth, as it did, a calendar of the ritual of the year, was, in fact, a political manifesto of no slight

significance. It announced to the Romans that their new chief, who had once saved their country from conquest and their gods from desecration, had now placed the one under the protection of the other, and bound them together by a pledge of mutual recognition. The policy of Augustus was on all sides essentially reactionary. It was inspired, we may believe, solely by an apprehension for his own safety founded upon the fate of Cæsar, and it was tempered, no doubt, by a keen practical sense of what was actually feasible and practicable. It was disturbed by no heated imaginations, by no real belief or persuasion. Augustus was gifted with a clear vision, and no mists of passion or prejudice arose in his mind to distort the rays derived from his observation and experience. Nor can we suppose that he was really insensible to the prevailing force of circumstances around him. He did not flatter himself with the hope that the progress of ideas could ultimately be arrested. It was enough for him if he could divert or moderate them; enough, at least, if he could persuade his fretful countrymen that he was doing all he could, and more than anyone else could or would do, to maintain their empire on the stable foundations of the ancient ways. It is just possible that a man of greater genius and boldness might have moulded his opportunity to a higher issue by guiding the revolutionary forces which he strove merely to restrain. But we must acknowledge how grand was the result which, following his own temper, and the bent of his own character, he did actually effect. The establishment of the Roman Empire was, after all, the greatest political work that any human being ever wrought. The achievement of Alexander, of Cæsar, of Charlemagne, of Napoleon is not to be compared with it for a moment.

A few words may be added on the general principles on which this empire was established. The name of Julius Cæsar was the watchword of the veterans who conquered under his nephew, and it continued dear to the mass of the citizens, by whom the opponent of the oligarchy was still regarded as the legitimate descendant of Marius and the avenger of the Sullan massacres. But the ablest writers of the Augustan era, the favourites of the court rather than of the people, shared but little in this general enthusiasm. Virgil and Horace have no panegyrics for the elder Cæsar. The merits of the two imperators were so distinct, that Augustus might have afforded to lavish the highest honours on the memory of his predecessor without throwing his own claims into the shade. But he had a political motive for disparaging the glories of the hero of Phar-

salia. The death of his rival Antonius completely changed his temper and his aspirations. Henceforth the princeps, or leader of the Senate, succeeds to the triumvir, as the triumvir had succeeded to the dictator. Augustus now draws nearer to the aristocracy against which in his early years he had waged a war of extermination. He devotes to its interests without reserve all the powers he has received from the triumphant democracy. Towards so generous a conqueror the nobles could not long retain their feelings of rancour, nor persist in refusing him their support when he promoted to the highest offices the son of the murdered Cicero, and a friend of the persecuted Brutus. They listened with admiration to the praise he bestowed on a course of conservation and reaction, as that by which the illustrious commonwealth of Rome could now alone be preserved; a system which he is proud to call his own, though built on the old foundations, and constructed with the old materials overthrown by the earthquake of civil strife.

Well indeed was this system devised both to interest the higher class and to tranquillise the lower. To the first it held out the prospect of honourable employment, while it checked the promptings of irregular ambition; to the second it substituted amusement for occupation, shows and largesses for military service. To the nobles Augustus could boast that, if the dictator had refused to be crowned as king, he had himself resigned more than once the title of Imperator, which they still continued to urge upon him. So far from taking away the life of a single citizen to obtain a crown, he would sooner lose his own life than wear one. To the people he affirmed that the sway of Rome over the nations was now completed and assured. To his countrymen, one and all, he could declare that he had secured the stability of their institutions by his piety to the gods. He had bribed the Immortals by gifts in which they most delighted. He had set up their fallen altars, revived their services, and rekindled the flame of devotion in the heart of the nation. To his own fortunes and to the fortunes of the state he had attached the powers of heaven for ever.

In reflecting upon the easy acquiescence of the Romans in a regal tyranny thus slightly disguised, we must first remember the lassitude and helplessness engendered by the hundred years of civil strife, which had led on from bloodshed to bloodshed, till all the nobler families of Rome had been decimated, and the old principles of the republic fallen into the careless keeping of a brood of bastard citizens. The genuine Roman race must have been almost used up

in the desperate warfare to which it had contributed bone and sinew. To such a mongrel nation as the Romans at this moment were, and even to those among them who could still affect legitimate descent from the companions of Romulus, royal rule could hardly imply degeneracy and decay. Under the sceptre of Philip the Macedonians had conquered Greece; under Alexander they had subjugated Asia. The Spartans had flourished under a dynasty of kings; even the Romans themselves, it might be remembered, had first proved their mighty energies under the auspices of a Romulus and a Tullus. Accordingly they were far from anticipating that the greatness of their country would decline under a prince's sway. For the living power of the state they looked, not so much to the effect of free action and discussion, as to certain established principles of social organisation. They put their trust, not in a free press and public opinion, but in the subordination of classes, the customs of antiquity, and the traditions of religion. Law, in the view of the ancients generally, was something divine and permanent, the exponent of eternal necessities. Hence their undoubting faith in sumptuary legislation; that is, in the attempt to restore, without regard to outward change of circumstance, the prescriptions of a normal antiquity. Hence the conviction of Augustus, or at least of his contemporaries, that in reviving ancient traditions he was launching his country on a new career of growth and progress.

In his personal habits and demeanour Augustus carefully distinguished between the Emperor and the Princeps. He protected his personal dignity by withdrawing from the familiarity with which Cæsar had allowed himself to address his legionaries. The conqueror of the Gauls had deigned to call his veterans by the name of 'comrades,' but Augustus spoke of them as his 'soldiers' only. But amidst the magnificence displayed around him, which he thought fit to encourage in his nobles, his own manners were remarkable for their simplicity. His mansion on the Palatine hill was moderate in size and ornament. His dress was that of a plain senator, and he let it be known that it was woven by the hands of Livia herself and the maidens in her apartment. He traversed the streets as a private citizen, with no more than the ordinary retinue of slaves and clients, courteously addressing the acquaintances he encountered, taking them by the hand, or leaning on their shoulders, allowing himself to be summoned as a witness in their suits, and attending at their houses on occasions of domestic interest. At table he was sober and decorous; he was generally the last to approach and the earliest to

quit the board. His guests were few in number, and chosen for the most part for their social qualities. If some ribald stories were current respecting his private habits, they referred perhaps to the looseness of his early years, or obtained little real credit. Augustus was especially fortunate in the services of the poets he attracted to his court and to his person. Horace taught his contemporaries to acquiesce in the new *régime* securely and contentedly, while Virgil kindled their imagination, and shed over the empire of the Cæsars the halo of a legendary antiquity. The *Æneid* persuaded the choicest spirits in Rome that the upstart plebeian Octavius was a direct descendant of the goddess Venus, and no unworthy rival of Hercules and Bacchus. And along with these, the greatest geniuses of Roman poetry, many lesser singers urged their countrymen to remember in their prayers the restorer of order, the creator of universal felicity. In the temples on days of public service, around their own hearths on every ordinary occasion, they were invited to thank the gods for all their prosperity, and with the gods themselves to join the hallowed names of Troy, of Anchises and *Æneas*, the patrons of the Julian race. And when they rose from the evening meal the last duty of the day was to call with a modest libation for a blessing on themselves and on Cæsar, 'the Father of his country.' This title was, indeed, the proudest any Roman could obtain; and this the citizens had long bestowed in private on their hero and patron, when at last the Senate took up the voice of the nation and conferred it upon him with due solemnity. The act, indeed, was not sanctioned by any formal decree; it seemed more fitting to give it the appearance of spontaneous acclamation. Valerius Messala, one of the noblest of the order, was deputed to offer the title in the name of the Senate and the people. 'Conscript Fathers,' replied the emperor, with tears, 'my wishes are now fulfilled, my vows are accomplished. I have nothing more to ask of the Immortals, but that I may retain to my dying day the unanimous approval you now bestow upon me.'

CHAPTER LII.

Division of the provinces between the Emperor and the Senate.—Military organisation of the Empire—The naval stations—The finances—Extent and population—Population of the city—Agrippa and Mæcenas—Military operations under Augustus: His reduction of the Cantabri—Britain not attempted—Ælius Gallus in Arabia—Augustus in the East—The standards of Crassus recovered from the Parthians—Celebration of Secular games—Augustus in Gaul.—Operations against the Pannonians, the Dalmatians, and the Germans on the Rhine—Defeat of Lollius—Crafty policy of Licinus—Reduction of the Alpine tribes.

ITALY, the centre of the empire, now made to comprise the whole peninsula, from the Alps to the straits of Messina, was divided into eleven regions, and placed under the direct control of the prætor in the city. The rest of the Roman dominion was apportioned, as has been said, between the Emperor and the Senate. The Imperial provinces were the Tarraconensis and Lusitania, in Spain; the whole of Gaul beyond the Alps divided into several commands, including the Upper and Lower Germanies, as they were called, or the districts bordering upon the Rhine; Pannonia and Macedonia; Cœlesyria and Phœnicia; Cilicia, Cyprus, and Egypt. To the Senate were assigned Bætica, Numidia, Africa, Cyrenaica, and the great islands off the coast of Italy, Achaia, and Asia. Dalmatia and Illyricum, at first given to the Senate, were soon afterwards taken by the emperor in exchange for the Narbonensis and Cyprus. Before the end of his career Augustus made a peaceable acquisition of Palestine, annexing it for a time to the empire, which then extended over every coast and island of the Mediterranean, excepting only the independent kingdom of Mauretania. In some quarters, as in Gaul, Spain, and Pannonia, the sway of Rome penetrated some hundreds of miles into the interior of the continent; but for the most part the regions remote from the great inland sea, the highway of international traffic, were wholly barbarous. Gaul and Thrace were little better than vast forests; only a small portion of their soil was as yet subjected to cultivation. The great cities of the empire, the marts of human industry and emporia of commerce, were almost universally seated on the coasts, or on the banks of navigable rivers. The civilisation of Greece and Rome occupied, in its best days, a mere fringe on the borders of the Mediterranean; and when the Romans boasted of having subdued the world they

really confined their views to the countries washed by those inland waters.

The entire possession of this central basin afforded easy access to every province throughout its vast extent; and the facility thus given to communication between them, when the police of the seas was vigilantly enforced, developed their capabilities simultaneously, and bound them all together by the chain of a common interest. No empire was ever more favourably circumstanced than the Roman for the advancement of its national prosperity, and for the interchange of sentiment between all its members. So completely was peace the common interest of the inhabitants of all its inland shores, that the Mediterranean provinces were left almost wholly without military garrisons; every state and town could be trusted to maintain its own police, and keep watch over the behaviour of all the rest. Italy and Rome itself were left almost destitute of regular defenders; the emperor confided his own personal safety to a few scattered cohorts of prætorians or body-guards; it was not till the reign of his next successor that these battalions were first collected together in a camp at the gates of the city. Their numbers at no time exceeded 10,000 or 20,000. The legions which constituted the standing army of the empire were relegated to the frontiers, or to distant and turbulent provinces. Three of these divisions, each a little army in itself, were stationed in the Spanish peninsula. The banks of the Rhine were guarded by as many as eight; two were quartered in Africa, two in Egypt, four occupied the Eastern frontier on the line of the Euphrates, four more were posted on the Danube, and finally two were held in reserve in Dalmatia, within easy reach of Rome itself, if their presence should at any time be demanded there. The full complement of each of these twenty-five legions was 6,100 foot and 720 horse, and this continued, with occasional variations, to be their strength for a period of 300 years. The cohorts of which each legion consisted were ten in number, besides its squadrons of horse. They were recruited generally from the rugged regions beyond Italy, at first indeed, among the genuine citizens of Rome in the provinces, but this restriction was not long maintained. The inhabitants of the peninsula began now to claim exemption from legionary service altogether, and were enlisted in the prætorian bands only. Numerous battalions of auxiliaries were levied from the most warlike of the subject populations, arrayed and armed according to their native usage, and attached to each legionary division. Their num-

bers no doubt fluctuated considerably; but it is generally computed that they equalled those of the legionaries, and we may thus assign a force of 340,000 men for the entire armies of the empire, exclusive of the cohorts in the capital.

Augustus seems to have been the first to appoint a regular and permanent naval force. The Romans had, indeed, established their maritime supremacy on various occasions. They had put down the rivalry of the Carthaginians, they had out-numbered the fleets of Greece and the Grecian islands, they had seized the ships and ports of Phœnicia and Egypt. They had suppressed the pirates of the Eastern Mediterranean, and destroyed the power of Sextus Pompeius. Agrippa had proved himself an able commander by sea, and he had taken pains to secure his victories by the establishment of an admirable harbour on the coast of Campania. It was by his advice, no doubt, that the emperor maintained three powerful armaments, at Misenum, at Ravenna, and at Forum Julii, or Fréjus, in Gaul. We do not, indeed, hear that these flotillas were ever called into requisition in regular warfare; but they kept the police of the seas, deterred the pirates from any renewal of activity, secured the free transmission of grain from the provinces to Rome, and convoyed the vessels which brought tribute in money from the East and the West.

The sources of public revenue were, indeed, numerous and varied. The public domain, reserved in ancient times to the state after each successive contest, had now been generally divided among the citizens, or remitted to their subjects; the tribute, or land-tax, originally imposed upon citizens and subjects alike, had been remitted to the soil of Italy since the conquest of Macedonia; but this contribution was still levied throughout the provinces, in money or in kind, and the capitation tax pressed alike upon every inhabitant of the Roman dominions. Mines and quarries, fisheries and salt-works, were generally public property farmed for the state. Tolls and customs were exacted on every road and in every city; and most of the objects of personal property, both dead and live stock, including slaves, paid a duty in proportion to their value. Augustus imposed a rate of one-twentieth on legacies, but this mild experiment in direct taxation caused considerable murmurs. The great corn-growing countries of Egypt and Africa made a special contribution of grain for the supply of Rome and Italy. The largesses, both of victuals and money, to the people, which had been an occasional boon from the early times of the republic, were hence-

forth conferred regularly and systematically; and there was no more fatal error in the policy of the empire—though it was neither invented by the emperors, nor could they relieve themselves from it—than the taxation of industry in the provinces to maintain idle arrogance at home.

When Augustus had consolidated under his sway the regions between the Rhine, the Danube, the Euphrates, and Mount Atlas, the empire reached almost the farthest limits that it ever permanently retained. The conquest of Britain had not yet been seriously undertaken. The population this vast region now embraced may be computed at somewhat less than 100,000,000; but we may fairly suppose that, under the general reign of peace and domestic prosperity which long prevailed, the number continued to increase for at least another century. With regard to the question of the population of the great city, 'the head and mistress of nations,' there is doubtless room for much discussion. The extent of the site of Rome, the number of houses at least as recorded at a much later period, and the numbers of the citizens to whom Augustus granted the customary largess, offer various and not easily reconcileable data. It may suffice here to reckon it roughly at 700,000, and to add that it continued also to increase perhaps even after the general population of the empire had begun to decline, though it may never have much, if at all, exceeded 1,000,000. It is probable that both Antioch and Alexandria approached nearly, if not quite, to the same amount.

One of the chief cares of the new ruler was the embellishment of this capital. He erected many temples and public buildings himself, and he stimulated his great nobles to follow his example. In this, as in other objects, he was ably seconded by his friend Agrippa, who, after exhibiting so much valour and conduct in his behalf, distinguished himself not less by the loyalty with which, having secured beyond dispute the second place in the commonwealth, he abstained from aiming at the first. In the year 731 (B.C. 23), when Augustus was prostrated by a fever from which he seemed little likely to recover, it was to Agrippa that he handed his ring, a hint, as it was generally deemed, that it was on him he would most desire that the empire should be conferred. To Agrippa he himself entrusted, on his recovery, an extensive command throughout the Eastern provinces, which made him almost an equal, and a possible rival to himself.

Augustus was further supported for many years by the tact and

prudence of C. Cilnius Mæcenas. This man had administered for him the government of Italy during his struggle with Antonius. He continued to be his chief adviser in the settlement of his affairs; and to him the Romans ascribed the first outline of the principles of government which grew at last into the imperial system. A popular tradition, founded perhaps on the known character of the two men respectively, affirmed that when Augustus deliberated about resigning his powers he took counsel with Agrippa and Mæcenas; the one advised the restoration of the republic, the other the retention of the empire. The private habits of the minister were not less serviceable to his master's position than his political counsels. Mæcenas contrived to attach to the new system many of the best and ablest statesmen of the day, while he secured in its favour the voice of the literary class. The table at which Virgil and Horace, Varius and Pollio conversed genially together, under the patronage of Mæcenas, and in the presence of Augustus himself, was the field on which all the adverse theories of politics and philosophy were brought to an amicable settlement. Never was a state-revolution so gilded with the flattery of poets and historians as the seasonable usurpation of Augustus.

The principal events of a reign which extended over more than forty years are for the most part of little mark or interest, and may be enumerated succinctly. The victor's return to Rome from the East in 29 was immediately followed by his triple triumph, 'over the Illyrians, over the Egyptians at Actium, and over Cleopatra herself at Alexandria.' The last of the civil wars was thus brought to a close. After a struggle of twenty-one years peace was restored to the Roman world, and the temple of Janus was shut. This happy event of which the citizens could recall only two previous instances, was celebrated with the loudest acclamations. Nevertheless Augustus, however peaceably he was himself inclined, was compelled to employ arms to repress the rebellious spirit of the Iberian mountaineers, and even took himself the command against them. Stricken with sickness, as more than once before, he quitted the camp, and left to his generals the reduction of the Cantabri, which was reckoned one of the most notable exploits of his imperium. On the accomplishment of this conquest, B.C. 25, he closed Janus a second time. He had the fortune to perform this auspicious rite on a third occasion, but the exact date is not recorded in Roman history. Nor, indeed, did the 'Pax Romana,' as it was proudly designated, continue long at any time without more or less

U.C. 725.

B.C. 29.

U.C. 729.

B.C. 25.

vexatious interruptions. The frontiers of the empire, and some of its interior districts also, were frequently disturbed by foreign or domestic enemies. Neither was the old spirit of Roman aggression yet wholly pacified. For a moment, indeed, it was expected that the emperor would conduct an armament in person across the Channel for the conquest of Britain. The poets already announced their visions of the captive islanders descending the Sacred Way towards the Capitol. But from such an adventure, if ever contemplated, he prudently abstained, nor did he cause any attempt to be made to retrieve the ill-success of Cæsar, or recover the tribute which had never been received. He sanctioned an expedition, however, into the southern regions of Arabia with no apparent object but to satisfy the national greed of conquest and of plunder. Ælius Gallus, in the year 24, conducted a naval armament along the coast of the Red Sea, and landed a force of 10,000 men at a place called Leuce Come, supposed to be the modern Haura, from whence it marched towards the spice country by a circuitous route in quest of allies who failed to give the assistance required. The army suffered grievously, as might be expected, from the soil and the climate; its furthest point of advance, which is called Marsyaba, may have lain a little to the south of Mecca. The expedition returned with much loss and no advantages acquired. The mortification of Augustus at this first disappointment was but slightly relieved by the successes of Petronius on the southern border of Egypt, and the tribute he exacted from the Ethiopian queen Candace.

In the year 21 Augustus, who had just put down the abortive and frivolous conspiracy of Murena, found himself so strong and secure at Rome that he did not hesitate to make a prolonged visit to the eastern regions of his empire. On his way he stopped in Sicily to plant colonies in Syracuse and other declining cities; from thence he passed into Greece, and bestowed special favours on Sparta, while he withdrew from Athens her lucrative privilege of selling her franchise. At Samos he passed the winter, and proceeded the next spring into Asia, where he settled the prerogatives of various communities and potentates. It would seem that he extended his progress as far as Syria, where he inflicted chastisement on the turbulent populations of Tyre and Sidon, and possibly advanced into Palestine, and made some favourable disposition of territory to Herod, the king of Judea, in person. But the last and greatest object of this proconsular tour was to recover

the standards of Crassus from the Parthians. Tiberius Claudius was sent in advance with an army to make the demand more imposing, and when he had reached Armenia, Phraates, the Parthian sovereign, felt that the conjuncture was serious, and offered no resistance. The standards, or rather, perhaps, the brazen eagles which surmounted them, were the cherished objects of the soldier's affections, and sometimes of his worship, which he was bound by the military sacrament never to abandon. After an interval, however, of more than thirty years few of the captives survived, and of these not many would care to relinquish their new ties and occupations. Phraates, himself, if we may trust the testimony of the imperial medals, did homage at the feet of the emperor's representative, and received the crown from his hands. The long-lost trophies were brought by Tiberius to his father, and by him transmitted to Rome, where they were greeted U.C. 734. with acclamations, and deposited in the temple of Mars B.C. 20. the Avenger; and the pæans which the poets raised on the occasion have surrounded them with more than common lustre in the eyes of posterity.

Augustus had accepted a renewal of his imperial functions for a second term of five years in 18. The empire might be regarded as definitively established. Such an event might be not unfitly marked by the celebration of the Secular games, which were supposed to be held, though with no great regularity, every hundredth or hundred and tenth year of the republic. Augustus determined to inaugurate his restoration of the state by this solemn ceremony. The Sibylline books, examined by his obsequious ministers, readily presented the sanction he required. The forms of the ceremonial were investigated by the most learned antiquaries. They were to U.C. 737. occupy three days and nights, and heralds traversed the B.C. 17. streets inviting every citizen to attend upon a spectacle 'which none of them had ever yet seen, and none could ever see again!' The ceremonies themselves were of the simplest kind, consisting of the distribution of sulphur, pitch, wheat, and barley to the citizens. The Aventine, the Palatine, and the Capitoline were paraded by the multitude. Sacrifices, of course, were offered, the 'game of Troy' was enacted, and the festival ended with the performance of a choral ode of praise and thanksgiving; probably the actual hymn which Horace inserted among his poems, and entitled the '*Carmen Sæculare*.'

In the following year Agrippa was sent again into Asia, and in

15 Augustus quitted Rome himself to examine the state of affairs in the North, from the capital of transalpine Gaul. Not only had many of the mountain tribes rushed to arms, but beyond the Alps the Pannonians and Noricans had invaded the Istrian peninsula, which now claimed to be a portion of Italy. The Dalmatians were in open revolt, Macedonia was ravaged by the Mæsiæns, the Sarmatians had inundated Thrace. An irruption of the Germans on the lower Rhine had been attended with the defeat of the imperial legate Lollius, and the loss of an eagle. This disaster had, indeed, been retrieved before the emperor's arrival; but his vigilance was awakened to the cause of the weakness of his government. His procurator, Licinus, himself a Gaul by extraction, had shaken the fidelity of the people by his monstrous extortions. On reaching Lugdunum the emperor required an account of his transactions. But Licinus, we are told, invited his master to visit him, and when he had exhibited the treasures he had amassed Augustus acknowledged the good policy he had pursued towards rich and faithless dependencies, and accepted the splendid bribe. Whatever be the truth of this discreditable story, it seems certain that the procurator retained his wealth, and became a by-name for unhonoured magnificence.

The state, however, of the North hardly admitted of being so trifled with. The position of Gaul especially, lying between the hostile zones of Germany and Vindelicia, demanded more than ordinary vigilance. There were no ready means or routes of communication between Gaul and Pannonia. The passes of the eastern Alps were still in the hands of the barbarians. The rich plains of the Cisalpine offered them a tempting prey, and the honour as well as the security of Italy herself demanded their complete subjugation. The Salassi and other western tribes had been reduced already; but

in 15 Drusus Claudius Nero, the emperor's younger step-son, now in his twenty-third year, overthrew the Rhætians in the Tridentine Alps, and defeated the Breuni and Genauni in the valley of the Inn. At the same time Tiberius, ascending the valley of the Rhine from Gaul, had reached the lake of Constance, and, by the use of a flotilla rapidly constructed, surprised the enemy in various quarters. The Eastern Alps were pacified once for all. The Vindelici and the Rhæti disappear from the history on which they figured only for a moment. It became the policy of the Romans to push forward their colonists into the region between the lake of Constance and the upper Danube, and cut off the Helvetians from contact with German liberty.

CHAPTER LIII.

The imperial family—Drusus Nero on the Rhine—His surname Germanicus—His premature death—Tiberius Nero in Pannonia—Death of Agrippa—Caius and Lucius, his sons by Julia—Tiberius marries Julia; parts from her—She is banished to an island; he retires to Rhodes—He is received again into favour; associated in the Tribunician power—His expedition to the Elbe, A.D. 4.—His expedition against the Marcomanni, A.D. 6.—Revolt in Pannonia—Troubles in the imperial family—Seclusion of the younger Julia and of Agrippa Postumus—Banishment of the poet Ovid—Disaster of Varus in Germany—Consternation in the city—Tiberius resumes the command on the Rhine and earns a triumph—The young Germanicus left in command—Augustus causes a census to be held; compiles his 'Breviarium,' and dies A.D. 14.

WE are entering on the career of an imperial dynasty. The history of Rome becomes now closely connected with the names and characters of the members of a single family. We shall seldom have occasion henceforth to notice the consuls and tribunes of the Roman commonwealth, whose titles, indeed, will yet remain—that of Consul, indeed, for many ages—but whose functions will have fallen into abeyance, or become circumscribed within narrow limits. The emperors, from Augustus onwards, will commonly assume the title of consuls, and will associate with themselves sometimes the real chiefs of the aristocracy, sometimes mere upstart favourites of their own creation, and to these the dignity will be generally conceded for a few months or weeks or for days only. The emperors will continue to hold the tribunician power unintermittingly, and will even date the years of their reign by it, but the actual tribunes of the plebs will henceforth be no longer recognised. On the other hand, the kindred and connexions of the emperor will occupy a prominent place in the government of the state, and their figures must appear on the canvas of our history. They will constitute the slender aggregate of human beings from whom the rulers of the world are to be chosen.

Octavia, the sister of Augustus, who has been mentioned as the wife of M. Antonius, had been previously united in marriage to one of the old nobility named C. Marcellus, and had by him a son, M. Marcellus, who became and for a brief space continued to be the hope of the house, in default of sons to his uncle. At the time when Augustus had obtained full possession of power, and might feel himself entitled to bequeath it, his nephew was growing in years,

and giving excellent promise of ability. To the young Marcellus he had already given his own daughter, Julia, borne to him by Scribonia, and his only issue. But Marcellus died prematurely in the year 23. being then only twenty years of age, leaving no offspring. Whatever might have been his real merits or just expectations, the luckless youth will always be recommended to a favourable estimate by the matchless praises bestowed upon him by Virgil. On her husband's death, however, Julia was quickly transferred to M. Agrippa, and to him and his family the prospect of the succession was thus not indirectly opened. The issue of Agrippa by Julia was numerous. First came two sons, Caius and Lucius, who lived to man's estate, and were set forward in the career of public office and the conduct of affairs, but both of whom were cut off in early life, the one in the year A.D. 4, the other in A.D. 7. A third son, born after the death of Agrippa, and surnamed Postumus, was condemned by his grandfather as unfit for public life, first removed to confinement in an island, and eventually, as commonly reported, put privately to death by his orders. There were also two daughters of the same marriage, a Julia, married to an Æmilius Paulus, and an Agrippina, who was united to a Claudius distinguished by the surname of Germanicus, of whom more remains to be related.

But if so few and, for the most part, so obscure were the direct descendants of the great emperor, he had attached another branch to the stem of his house through his last marriage with Livia Drusilla. This noted matron, of whom the Romans had much to say, for good and for evil, as the first woman who attained a public position and became a real power in the state, had been married to Tiberius Claudius Nero. She had already borne him a son, Tiberius, when Octavius divorced Scribonia, and snatched her away from her husband to make her his own consort while pregnant with another, who received the name of Drusus, and of whom popular scandal made Octavius himself the real father. This union was effected in the year 38, and from this time Livia, though she bore no more issue, maintained complete dominion over the heart of her new husband. She contrived to put her own children foremost in his confidence, and ultimately in his affections. Tiberius and Drusus both grew up to eminence. They were both men of conduct and ability; every advantage was thrown in their way, and they were not unequal to the powers entrusted to them. They signalled themselves in early life in the command of the Roman forces against

the Alpine mountaineers, and it was to them, as they advanced in years, that Augustus was proud to confide the more arduous duties involved in the struggles he maintained against the Germans and the Pannonians. The wars of Germany and the campaign in Pannonia are closely connected with the career of these favoured stepsons of the emperor.

On these two pillars of the imperial throne, after the premature death of Marcellus, the hopes of Augustus seemed to rest. He required of both an entire devotion to his interests and those of the state; he demanded of both the sacrifice of ease and comfort, retaining them in distant frontiers at the head of his armies, far from the pleasures of the capital and the temptations it afforded to unpopular arrogance. While Tiberius was sent to quell an insurrection in Pannonia, Drusus had been already charged with the administration of Gaul on the emperor's departure to Rome. The nations beyond the Alps were still uneasy at the exactions of Licinus, and the Germans were preparing again to cross the Rhine, when the young prince invited his subjects to display their loyalty by raising an altar to Augustus at Lugdunum. He summoned the chiefs of every state to attend the ceremony. A noble Roman was prevailed on to accept the chief priesthood of the new cult, and the religious principle of the Druids, hitherto a source of danger and embarrassment to the conquerors, was confronted by the awful associations connected with the majesty of the emperor and the fortune of the Roman state.

We are used to regard the Rhine as the permanent boundary of the great Southern empire; and that such for some centuries it really was is attested by the chain of fortified posts along its left bank, which served to check the incursions of the Germans. But though the Romans seemed to be thus early impressed with a presentiment that they had here reached the natural limit of their conquests, there was a time when, under the guidance of the impetuous youth who now commanded their legions in that quarter, they dreamed of extending their sway into the heart of Germany, and reducing central Europe to the same state of subjection as Gaul or Spain. Rome had conquered the Celts; she now essayed to conquer the Teutons, and began by fixing the base of her operations on the eastern frontier of her great Gaulish province.

The Suevi, the powerful German people who had invaded Gaul in the time of Cæsar, seem now to have fallen out of the page of history. We do not know whether they had become exterminated

in the course of the internal revolutions of their country, or whether they actually reappear in the wars of this period under the name of the Chatti, a state or combination of states which occupied for the most part the regions bordering upon the rivers Mayn and Neckar. But the efforts of Drusus were first directed against another cluster of tribes which lay further north, such as the Usipetes on the Lippe, and the Sicambri on the Lahn. His aim was to penetrate through this region as far as the Weser, and the seats of the powerful Chauci and Cherusci; but to complete the reduction of these remoter tribes he deemed it necessary to transport his forces by sea to the mouths of the great rivers that fall into the German Ocean, and thus take them unexpectedly on their flank. He easily drove the enemy before him by land; but the flotilla which he had equipped for his maritime adventure, was shattered in the waves and shallows, and the approach of winter furnished an excuse for a hasty and in-

U.C. 742.

B.C. 12.

glorious retreat. The Romans, however, had gained experience, which they stored up with their usual pertinacity for future use. In a second campaign the young general advanced the eagles even to the banks of the Weser, in the country of the Cherusci, the modern Paderborn and Detmold; but the Germans retired steadily before him, refusing to risk a battle; and though some differences in their camp prevented their hearty combination against him, he did not extricate himself from so perilous an advance without difficulty. He planted, however, an outpost at a place named Aliso, on the Lippe, some fifty miles east of the Rhine; and for his successes,

U.C. 743.

B.C. 11.

such as they were, the emperor granted him the triumphal ensigns and the honour of an ovation, while he refused him the title of imperator. Meanwhile Tiberius was prosecuting a war of conquest against the Pannonians, and his exploits were deemed worthy of similar recognition. Augustus had the satisfaction of exhibiting both his stepsons to the people in the character of national heroes. In the year 11 B.C. Tiberius was married to Julia, and about the same time died Octavia, the injured wife of Antonius, the darling of the last generation of citizens.

Early in the year 10 B.C. Augustus once more quitted Rome to visit Gaul. The great interests of the empire seemed still to gravitate northwards. He charged Tiberius to defend Pannonia against an irruption of Dacians, but Drusus at the same time urged another expedition beyond the Rhine, and the emperor yielded, perhaps reluctantly, to his instances. In B.C. 9 Drusus had become consul; he did not fail, however, to resume his distant command, and

U.C. 744.

B.C. 10.

after penetrating through the country of the Chatti, turned northward, crossed the Weser, and reached the Elbe, while the Cherusci still steadily refused to encounter him. Again he became alarmed at the perils by which he was surrounded. Omens were imagined or invented to excuse his hasty return. A woman of more than mortal stature was said to have crossed his path and warned him of the fate that was impending over him. The Romans erected a trophy to mark the point which they had reached, but before they regained the Rhine the young conqueror fell from his horse, and died of his injuries. Augustus, who was still at Lugdunum, summoned Tiberius to attend at his brother's deathbed, and charged him to bring the remains to Rome. At Ticinum Augustus himself met the funeral convoy, and pronounced an oration over the body when it was placed in the mausoleum he had erected for his family in the Campus Martius. The young hero had been honoured with the title of Germanicus, and this cognomen was allowed, by an almost unique exception to Roman usage, to descend to his son.

The acts of Tiberius in Pannonia have not been recorded with the same particularity as those of his brother in Germany; he had succeeded, however, in consolidating the Roman power south of the Danube, when he was called to the Rhine to complete the conquests which Drusus had commenced in Germany. He carried on campaigns in the years 8 and 7, with no great energy and with no striking results. The districts, indeed, nearest to the Rhine on both sides had been exhausted by the long-continued drain upon their resources. The further the legions penetrated the more scanty became the objects of plunder, and the greater the difficulty of bringing up men and horses and munitions of war. It is probable that Augustus himself, always moderate and perhaps timid, shrank from committing his dynasty to the risks of war upon a great scale. He accepted for himself the glorious prerogative of extending the pomerium of the city, reserved for such commanders only who had enlarged the limits of the empire, and then withdrew Tiberius to Rome and made him a second time consul. The affairs of Germany were now committed for several years to a series of military officers, who carried on the Roman policy by stealth rather than by force of arms. The border-tribes became habituated to the arts and usages of the Southern conquerors.

The death of Agrippa in the year 12 B.C. had removed the ablest of the defenders of the empire, the warrior and statesman to whom the Roman people would have most willingly entrusted the govern-

ment of their affairs in case of the emperor's decease, and in whom Augustus himself placed the greatest confidence. But since that time the sons of Tiberius Nero and of Livia had been advancing in the experience of affairs. Drusus had died; the interests of the mother, powerful as she was with her second husband, all centered in Tiberius. The union between Tiberius and Julia had proved unfruitful; the only child which had been born to it had died in infancy; but Julia had had a numerous progeny by her first husband, Agrippa, and to these children the emperor began now to look for the future support of his power. The two elder, Caius and Lucius, were about fourteen and ten years old respectively at the time when he withdrew Tiberius from Germany. Caius had already served his first campaign. But the conduct of Julia was so scandalous that Augustus was constrained to banish her to an island. It is not impossible that the disgrace into which she fell was the result of Livia's jealousy; but if so, the intrigue was only half-successful, for the fall of the mother seemed to increase the grandfather's affection for the children; and Tiberius found himself so ill at ease in the palace that he withdrew moodily from Rome, and threw himself into voluntary exile in the distant retreat of Rhodes. Here he remained for seven years, in the performance of no public functions, pretending to study and cultivate letters in the schools, but really surrounding himself with soothsayers or fortune-tellers, with whom he busily inquired into his own future career. The folly of this conduct was flagrant; and we shall hardly believe that the man who could so injure his own prospects could be the deep and astute politician he is so commonly represented. When, tired at last of his self-imposed restraint, he asked permission to return, the emperor coldly forbade him; and when at last he yielded to his instances required him to abstain from all public affairs, and give place in all things to his more favoured nephews. He was induced even to make a parade of his enforced abstention, and pretend that it was at his own request that Augustus refrained from adopting him, until the premature deaths of both the princes rendered his succession imperative.

The position of the emperor had become lonely, and might seem precarious. He had outlived the friends and advisers of his younger years. The death of Agrippa had been followed in B.C. 8 by that of Mæcenas. If the first had been the ablest of his lieutenants and his worthiest representative in the conduct of foreign affairs, the other had acted as his principal minister at home. Never-

theless, when Augustus had discovered the conspiracy of Cinna, in A.D. 4, he could act with lofty magnanimity in pardoning the offender, and proving by a signal act of clemency how completely he had unlearned the habits of cruelty in which he had once indulged. He might feel that his best security now lay in widening the basis of his dynasty, and giving more than one heir to the empire. Accordingly he invested Tiberius with the tribunician power, which was equivalent to association with himself. At the same time, while adopting him as his own son, he conferred a similar adoption upon Agrippa Postumus, and required Tiberius to adopt the young Germanicus, together with his own child by his first consort, Vipsania, who bore the name of Drusus.

Tiberius now put himself at the head of the legions in Germany, and carried on their operations with increased vigour. He made two U.C. 757. campaigns in the North in the years A.D. 4 and 5, the last U.C. 758. of which was remarkable both for the scale on which it was conducted and for the bold and large scheme of conquest which it embraced. Reserving for himself in person the conduct of the main body of his forces eastward from Aliso, Tiberius directed a numerous flotilla, long before prepared on the Rhine, to skirt the shores of the Northern Ocean, and to penetrate to the mouth of the Elbe and ascend its yet unknown waters till the two armaments should meet together at an appointed latitude. This able combination was actually carried out, and the praises freely lavished upon it cannot be regarded as too warm for so memorable an achievement. The result, indeed, was hardly equal to the preparations made. The Germans seem to have retired before the advancing enemy, and in the lack of victories to celebrate a courtly encomiast vaunts the merit, unusual in a Roman general, of sparing the lives of his soldiers.

These repeated advances, however, with the speedy retreat and proffered submission of the natives, could not fail to extend the influence of Rome throughout a great portion of Central Europe. The young chiefs of the Rhine and Elbeland began to crowd to Rome to learn her lessons of government, while many of their followers and dependents settled within her walls. The views of Tiberius extended to the complete subjugation of the whole country before him; but he lacked the military ardour of a Cæsar or a Pompeius, nor was he supported, perhaps, by the full approbation of the emperor. Augustus perceived but too clearly that affairs were tending to give unchecked preponderance to the military power. The mercenaries now enlisted under the Roman eagles

began to clamour for increased pay and privileges, or to remonstrate against the policy of keeping them for so many years on the frontiers. The citizens became more and more reluctant to embrace the profession of arms, and refused, while living on the dole of public corn, to earn their bread under the austere discipline of the camp. The time had not yet arrived, but it was already dimly in prospect, when the direst enemies of Rome would be the soldiers she kept at arm's length on the Rhine and the Danube.

At the commencement of A.D. 6 Tiberius exchanged his post on the former river for the command of the armies stationed on the
U.C. 759.
A.D. 6. other. Preparations had been made for a grand attack upon the Marcomanni, a powerful people in Bohemia and other central regions of Germany. The chief station of the Romans in this quarter was Carnuntum, near the modern Presburg. Here he placed himself at the head of six legions, and proceeded to lead them westward in order to meet a force not inferior, which his lieutenant Saturninus was bringing eastward from the Rhine, cutting his way through the heart of the great Hercynian forest. This was a second combination of equal boldness with the last-mentioned. When we consider how ignorant the Romans were of these obscure and savage regions, which they had to traverse without even the compass for their guide, we cannot withhold our admiration from the boldness and the skill with which it was conceived and executed. It was not the fault of its contriver that it failed of complete success. The two armies, it seems, had come within a few days of meeting at some point to the north of the Danube, when Tiberius was disconcerted by the report of an insurrection in Pannonia. With his prey almost in his clutches he was too discreet to hazard the peace and safety of the empire. He offered terms to Maroboduus, the king of the Marcomanni; the Roman armies were ordered to retreat simultaneously, and they regained their respective quarters at least without dishonour.

The struggle of the Pannonians seems to have been truly formidable. It lasted for three years, and it was not without difficulty that the emperor could raise the levies which were required to suppress it. The great military empire began to show some signs of internal weakness. Augustus was himself dispirited. The populace of the city murmured against him. He had outlived the favour with which he had been so long regarded. He was harassed by the scandals which arose within his own family, and he became anxious for the future fortunes of his house. A younger Julia, the daughter

of Agrippa, and the princess he had already banished, brought fresh shame upon his family, and her too he punished by banishment to an island. The exile of the poet Ovid, which took place in the year 762, has been commonly ascribed to a supposed intrigue with this licentious woman; it seems more likely that he was implicated, however innocently, in some political intrigues, for which his friend Maximus suffered death, and Agrippa Postumus was disgraced and secluded. Augustus pretended, indeed, that this youth was of a temper so perverse or imbecile that he exercised his right, as head of the family, to remove him from the sight of the citizens, but such a pretext seems hardly worthy of acceptance. Whatever was the real cause of this treatment, we may at least believe that Livia rejoiced at it, and that Tiberius profited by it.

But the closing years of Augustus were further clouded by a great political disaster. The government of the half-constituted provinces beyond the Rhine had been entrusted to Quintilius Varus, an officer who had been accustomed to command among the supine and servile Asiatics, and who proved quite unequal to the task of curbing the bolder spirits of the Germans. He was a pedant who imposed upon the rude and turbulent natives the subtle system of Roman law and procedure, while as yet they were obedient to no other law than that of the sword. It is not improbable, indeed, that Augustus was himself deceived, and believed that the time had already come for relieving his Northern subjects from a purely military control. The Germans were incited to revolt by the genius of their hero, Arminius. They rose in force, and compelled the proconsul to collect three legions to confront them. Again they retired, and again he followed them, till they had led him among the passes of the Teutoburg forest, near the waters of the Ems. Here at last they fell upon him at a disadvantage, and forced him to retreat; but as their numbers and spirit increased the hardships of the retreat became more disastrous, and in the battle which followed they routed the legions, slew the proconsul, and carried off three eagles. The Romans had suffered no such terrible discomfiture except on the three fatal days of the Allia, of Cannæ, and of Carrhæ.

U.C. 762.
A.D. 9.

The news of this disaster roused the aged emperor to the most gallant exertions. Alone, or at least supported only by his son Tiberius, he manfully confronted the danger of a general rising of the North, and of seditions within the city. The raising of levies became more and more difficult, and it seemed unsafe to leave Rome

itself denuded of defenders. The handful of Gauls and Germans residing within the city were placed under strict control, and their auxiliary squadrons disarmed. The year A.D. 10 opened in gloom amidst the bustle of extraordinary preparations, which continued throughout it. The Gauls and Germans remained inactive, and at last sufficient forces had been collected and sent forward to enable Tiberius to assume the offensive at the commencement of the following year, and once more cross the Rhine, accompanied by the youthful Germanicus. The Germans, as usual, declined to meet the invader in the field, while he on his part abstained from attacking them in their strongholds. After traversing the open country for a few weeks in various directions, Tiberius withdrew slowly behind the frontier stream, and occupied himself during the remainder of the year in securing its defences. He had already earned a triumph for his victories in Pannonia; he forfeited it by no misadventure in Germany; and on his return to Rome he reassured the citizens by celebrating the long-expected solemnity. They were satisfied with this new proof of their reputed invincibility, and recked little of the losses they had sustained, and how long it must be before they could be replaced. The frontiers of the empire, to the eyes of statesmen, had permanently receded to the Rhine. Augustus himself sank into a state of nervous despondency. For many months after the news of the 'Varian massacres' he had allowed his hair and beard to grow untrimmed, and was even known to dash his head against the wall, exclaiming, 'Varus, Varus, restore me my legions!'

Upon recall of Tiberius to Rome, the emperor bestowed upon him the proconsular power in the provinces, but he detained him at the capital while he assigned the defence of the Rhine to the youthful Germanicus. Livia became more assured of her son's succession; yet rumours were not wanting of the impatience of Augustus at the moroseness of his temper, and of the gloomy augury he had formed of his career in power. The old man's health was now plainly failing; but he was anxious to leave his work complete, to ascertain the exact condition in which he had placed the commonwealth, and to bequeath to his posterity a record of all that he had accomplished. He proposed to hold a census of the people, the third he had undertaken since his accession to power; but on the occurrence of an unlucky omen he desisted from the work himself, and devolved it upon his destined successor. The census, however, was completed before the middle of A.D. 14,

and Augustus still lived. He employed the next few months in compiling a succinct memorial of his 'acts,' to be preserved in the public archives. The ruined wall of a temple at Ancyra, U.C. 767. engraved with this precious document in the Greek and A.D. 14. Latin languages, has preserved one of the most curious documents of antiquity, presenting us with a plain detailed statement of all the undertakings he accomplished, the offices he served, the honours he enjoyed, his liberality and magnificence, his piety towards the gods, his patriotism in behalf of the city. The record extends over a period of fifty-eight years, and the great deeds it enumerates are certainly not to be equalled by the achievements of any other hero of ancient or modern history. Yet even these are not so striking as the marvellous sobriety and dignity of its tone. Certainly, whatever we may think of the merits of Augustus, no deed of his life so well became him as the preparation thus made for quitting it. His last summer was spent in moving gently from one villa to another, and partly accompanying Tiberius, who was charged with a military commission in Illyricum. At Astura he contracted a dysentery, and proceeded on his recovery to Capua and Naples. At Nola he was attacked with a fatal relapse. Tiberius hurried back to be present at his death-bed; but Livia was on the watch, and announced, whether truly or not, that he had returned in time to receive his parting injunctions and perform the last offices of filial piety. Augustus had arrived at the verge of seventy-seven, and had lived in safety with his ambitious consort for half a century. The vulgar surmise that Livia poisoned him seems hardly worth a thought, except to warn us against too easy belief in many surmises of the same sort which will have hereafter to be mentioned.

The closing scene of this illustrious career has been portrayed with considerable minuteness. On the morning of his death, being now fully sensible of his approaching end, Augustus inquired whether there were any popular excitement in anticipation of it. Being no doubt reassured on this point, he called for a mirror, and desired that his grey hairs and beard should be decently arranged. Then, asking of his friends around him whether he had played well his part in life's drama, he muttered a verse from a comic epilogue, inviting them to greet his exit with applause. He made some inquiries after a sick grandchild of Tiberius; then, falling into the arms of Livia, he had just strength to commend to her the A.D. 14. memory of their long union. His end was perfectly tran- U.C. 767. quil. There was no cynicism in the gentle irony with which, at the

moment of death, he sported with the vanities of a human career. Though cheered with no religious hope for himself, nor soothed with any deepfelt yearnings towards his survivors, he was supported on the verge of the abyss by the unfailing power of the national instinct, and the assurance readily accepted that he had confirmed by a great achievement the fortunes of the Roman state.

CHAPTER LIV.

The birth of Jesus Christ—It occurred in a period of general peace—Peaceful policy of Augustus—Assumption of power by Tiberius—Discontent of the legions on the Danube and the Rhine appeased by Drusus and Germanicus—Campaigns of Germanicus—Recovery of the eagles of Varus—Germanicus recalled and sent to Syria—His death ascribed to foul means—Process against Plancus—Remarks on the law of ‘Majestas’ and the proceedings of the ‘delators,’ or informers.—(A.D. 14–20.)

THE human appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ dates from the latter portion of the reign of Augustus. Though commonly assigned, from an early tradition, to the year 753 of the city, as usually computed, it is now more accurately referred to a somewhat earlier period, and we shall probably be most exact if we U.C. 749.
B.C. 5. antedate it by just four years, when it has been shown, on nearly conclusive evidence, that Quirinius (or Cyrenius) was ‘first Governor of Syria.’ The early Christian interpreters, making too strict an appeal to Scripture prophecy, insisted that at the moment of the Divine Birth all the world was at peace. The actual state of the world, even of the world of the Romans, will hardly at this or perhaps any other period bear out such an assertion in its literal sense. On their frontiers at least, if not in the interior of their subject provinces, the Romans were always in arms, and enjoyed hardly a momentary respite from active operations. Nevertheless the government of Augustus was substantially peaceful; there was entire cessation from all civil wars; the Romans bore no arms one against another; the Romans were engaged in no desperate rivalry with any equal enemy. No civilised community, no great historic power, stood in array against them. Carthage was overthrown, Numidia and Mauretania were subjugated, Greece was prostrate, Egypt was annexed, Parthia refrained from aggression. Rome extended her hand to the great Oriental monarchs beyond the Euphrates. The Roman peace—‘pax Romana,’ as it was proudly

styled—reigned throughout all the regions in which the Scipios and Lucullus, and Pompeius and Cæsar had carried their victorious eagles. Certainly in a broad sense it might be truly said that the reign of Augustus was an interval of peace throughout the world known to the Romans. The prophecy of the Hebrew Scriptures was substantially fulfilled. The conception, indeed, of such an auspicious crisis in human history was something new and strange. Its grandeur made a deep impression upon the minds of the Romans. War, always war, had been the dominant idea of all earlier generations. Some faint sighs for rest might already be heard in the philosophy of Lucretius; but the poetry of the Augustan age echoes with jubilant strains on its actual attainment. The transition of the Roman mind from aspirations of unlimited aggression to views of mere repression and control was sudden, but it was not the less permanent. Henceforth the policy of the Government or the ambition of princes might sometimes dictate an attack; the descendants of the old imperators and proconsuls might chafe under a system which denied them the indulgence of bloodshed and rapine; but the people generally evinced no disposition for conquest, and would scarcely rouse themselves to avenge a national dishonour. It became the settled policy of their rulers to content themselves with fortifying the extremities of the empire, as the best security against war. The limits to which the generals of the republic had already advanced formed a well-defined frontier at almost every point of the whole circuit. Its standing forces were posted along the lines of the Rhine and Danube, their quarters secured by a long line of forts, and still further protected by the devastation of the regions in their front, and the transportation of the nearest barbarians within the limits of the adjacent province. In the East the border of the Roman dominions was less accurately marked; but the mountain passes which lead into Lesser Asia were strongly guarded; and the nominal independence of certain states inclosed within them was a wise provision for its defence.

The control of this peaceful empire had been wielded without serious dispute by a single hand for a period of forty-four years. From the battle of Actium to the death of Augustus the Roman people had enjoyed complete immunity from all internal dissensions. The grandchildren of the men who had waged the civil wars had no sympathy with the ambitious feelings which had been kindled in the bosom of an earlier generation by the startling successes of demagogues and adventurers. The greatest

U.C. 723.

U.C. 767.

houses of the Commonwealth had left few or no representatives; among those that remained there were none especially prominent as statesmen or warriors. Augustus had shared his counsels generally with men of the second rank, and his armies he had entrusted to leaders of his own family. There was no near cause for apprehension from a rival among the nobility. Augustus had mentioned three only as possible competitors: of these Lepidus, he said, was equal to empire, but would disdain or shrink from it; Asinius Gallus might be ambitious, but was unequal to it; and one only, the rich and highborn Arruntius, might have both the talents and the spirit to aspire to it. But Arruntius bore no official distinction; he was unknown to the army, and the fidelity of the few troops about the capital was assured to Tiberius by the oath they had taken to him as coadjutor to their actual emperor. It is uncertain whether Augustus still breathed when Livia recalled her son to his bedside; but on the arrival of Tiberius there was no further need for disguise, and the decease of the one and succession of the other were proclaimed together to the soldiers. The only precaution that seems to have been taken was the assassination of the wretched Agrippa Postumus in his secluded exile. It is just possible that the mere name of Agrippa may have caused alarm to the new aspirant, but it is difficult to conceive an adequate motive for the crime, and great uncertainty must be allowed to hang over the real fate of this helpless prisoner.

With the announcement of the emperor's decease Tiberius summoned the Senate by virtue of his tribunician power. The consuls and chief magistrates swore obedience to him as their emperor, and the formula was repeated by all the officers of state, and echoed by the soldiers. The testament of Augustus declared him heir to all his private fortune, and this was easily accepted as a devolution of his public pre-eminence also. The Senate and people vied with one another in decreeing funeral honours, till Tiberius himself interposed to moderate them. But a personage of distinction was found to affirm that he had beheld the hero's soul ascend from his ashes into heaven; and temples, priests, and holy observances were decreed in honour of the divine Augustus, as formerly of the divine Julius. The apotheosis of dead emperors became henceforth a recognised institution of state. Meanwhile all the remaining functions of imperial power were heaped upon Tiberius; and, after a decent show of resistance, he consented to become the actual chief of the Roman people. It is to be remarked that at this time Tiberius

withdrew from the centuries the form of voting for the consuls. It is evident that it was with the full acquiescence, and possibly at the actual instance, of the citizens that the emperor henceforth nominated four candidates for the two offices, and allowed the Senate simply to choose among them.

Tiberius felt hardly yet secure of his position at Rome when the discontent of the legions, both on the Danubian and the Rhenish frontier, at the length of their service, the slenderness of their pay, and more than all, perhaps, at the cessation of active warfare and lack of plunder, broke out in both quarters into active mutiny. The commander of the forces in Pannonia was compelled to send their complaints to Rome. The emperor replied by placing his son Drusus at their head; but he gave the prince no definite instructions, and it was by the accident of an opportune eclipse which alarmed them that he was enabled, with some trifling concessions, to recall them to the standards.

The position of Germanicus on the Rhine was still more critical, for the legions under his command threatened to carry him in triumph to the city and thrust him into the seat of empire. The times were not ripe for such an adventure, nor had the young hero any such criminal aspirations. He soothed the passions of the soldiers by money and promises, and promptly turned their thoughts into another channel. He led them into the heart of Germany to avenge the loss of the Varian legions and recover their eagles. Tiberius had undertaken to define the frontier of the Roman occupation beyond the Rhine by a mound or cutting through the Cæsan forest across the upper waters of the Ruhr and Lippe; but Germanicus resolved to place the bulwarks of the empire further westward. He penetrated to some distance into the country of the Bructeri, Tubantes and Usipetes; but he failed to bring the enemy to a battle, and once more the invaders were compelled to retire with the close of the season without gaining any solid advantage. Tiberius seems to have remonstrated against a renewal of the attempt; but the young Cæsar ventured to disregard him, U.C. 768. and the next year commenced his operations earlier and A.D. 15. with more definite plans. Meanwhile dissensions had arisen among the German chiefs. Arminius had quarrelled with his father-in-law Segestes, who had carried off his wife and child and sent them as hostages to Rome. The power of the Cherusci was no doubt materially weakened, and when the Roman general succeeded in effecting the junction of all his forces, by sea and land, in the region

of the Teutoburg forest, they could visit securely the scene of the late disaster, and gather the remains of their slaughtered countrymen for decent burial. It was not till these rites were duly performed that Arminius found strength to attack the Romans, who were now slowly retreating. His movements were impetuous but ill-sustained, and he suffered a severe repulse. The invaders effected their return with no further molestation; but Germanicus himself, who took with one division the route by sea along the Frisian coast, suffered considerable loss from the treachery of the elements.

A second campaign had been hazarded, and still no material advantage had been gained. Germanicus, nothing daunted, made
A.U. 769. further and more extensive preparations, and advanced
A.D. 10. again the ensuing season to the Ems and the Weser. On this occasion he recovered the last of the Varian eagles, and succeeded in coming to a regular conflict with the full force of Arminius. Again the Roman arms were crowned with success. Germanicus proved himself a general worthy of the best days of Rome, and doubtless merited the high reputation he attained among his countrymen. But again he suffered vexatious loss in withdrawing a portion of his forces by sea, and finally his victories, however signal, resulted in no permanent occupation of the country he had traversed. Tiberius complained more and more strongly of these expensive and bootless enterprises; but it would be absurd to attribute his complaints to jealousy of the young Cæsar's rising credit. The exploits of Germanicus were conducted in defiance of the policy which Augustus had recommended and Tiberius might honestly embrace.

The pretext for the removal of Germanicus from his Northern command, which was publicly set forth, was the occasion which at the moment presented itself for the adjustment of the Syrian frontier. The decease of Archelaus, king of Cappadocia, had offered an opportunity for annexing that country to the empire, but the organisation of the new territory remained to be completed. At the same time the people of Commagene, and of some districts of Cilicia, were said to desire, on the death of their native princes, to be subjected to the direct dominion of Rome, while the provincials of Judæa and Syria were exclaiming against the weight of their burdens and calling for relief. Nor was the peace which had reigned between Rome and Parthia since the interview of the young Caius with Phraates, secure and satisfactory. The Romans retained a pledge for the conduct of the Parthians in the person of Vonones, a

son of Phraates, whom they might at any moment set up as a claimant for the throne which that people had themselves surrendered to Artabanus, a Median chief of the royal race of the Arsacidæ. A crisis had arrived when the majesty of the empire might be fittingly represented by one who, like Agrippa under the reign of Augustus, should enact the part of vice-emperor in person. Germanicus was something more than a proconsul; he was the adopted son of the ruler of the empire, equal to his true son Drusus in his legal status, and superior to him in age and experience.

Germanicus not unwillingly embraced the position held out to him. He amused himself with making a slow and curious journey through Greece and Asia, visiting Athens and the plains of Troy, and exhibiting the spirit of a literary inquirer rather than of a keen politician. He seems to have recommended himself on all sides by his gentleness and affability; it may be doubted whether he possessed the moral fibre of a statesman or a ruler of men. After making a progress to the Armenian capital, and placing the diadem on the head of a vassal of the empire; after gratifying the Parthians by the removal of Vonones to a distant residence; after finally reducing Commagene and Cappadocia to the form of provinces, he indulged himself in a tour through the wondrous land of Egypt, which lay beyond the bounds of his provinces, and which, indeed, it was formally forbidden to any Roman above the equestrian rank to visit. But all this time he was malignantly watched by his subordinate Cnæus Piso, a noble of high rank and ancient lineage, who had been appointed by the emperor to attend upon him. Augustus had assigned to the youthful Caius such an attendant, with the style of 'rector;' to Germanicus, as older and more experienced, it might suffice to attach a spy, under the title of 'adjutor.' What, indeed, were Piso's actual instructions was never really known. The Romans, in their passionate love for the younger Cæsar and their early and inveterate hatred of the elder, persuaded themselves that the ruin of Germanicus was determined from the beginning. They believed that the mind of their chief was poisoned from the first against every act and almost every word of their favourite; and when Germanicus, on his return from Egypt, sickened and died after a wasting illness, they were easily convinced that it was no natural dissolution. It was alleged that he had himself be-
U.C. 772.
A.D. 19.

trayed his suspicion of foul practice; it was even asserted that tokens of magical arts and incantations against him had been discovered; and when the corpse was exposed on the pyre some declared—though

others, it should be added, confidently denied it—that signs of death by poisoning could be clearly traced upon it. As for Tiberius himself he could not be moved to exhibit anger or suspicion. He protested that, much as he lamented the death of one so near to him, yet princes as well as private citizens must acquiesce in the common lot of humanity. But Piso, on the death of his superior, had audaciously seized on the position thereby vacated, and had made himself fairly amenable to legal process. He was required to return to Rome and justify himself before the Senate; and when, after the charges had been made against him, he was called upon for his defence, he retired to his closet, and was there found with his throat cut, and his bloody sword beside him. The rumour B.C. 778. easily arose that Tiberius had caused him to be assassinated, to silence any testimony against himself. There seems, however, no reason to doubt that he fell by his own hand. A.D. 20.

The death of Piso opens to us a new page in Roman history on which it will be well to make some general remarks. From this time forth we shall meet with a long succession of nobles whose deaths must be ascribed more or less directly to the antagonism in which their order stood to the imperial authority accepted by the Roman people. Cnæus Piso was a member of the Calpurnian gens, which claimed as ancient a descent as any of the oldest families of Rome, and, at least in the last century of the republic, had repeatedly filled the highest magistracies. The surname of Piso was common to more than one branch of this noble house, and the prænomen Cnæus had descended to the personage now before us from a father who had fought through the wars of Cæsar and Pompeius, had shared the disasters of Cassius and Brutus who, though pardoned by Octavius, had disdained to solicit employment under the new institutions. Only when spontaneously offered him had he deigned to accept the consulship. Cnæus Piso, the son, was reputed a proud man among the proudest of circles, the magnates of the expiring free state and the rising empire; a class whose intense self-assertion was inflamed by family names, family rites and images. The decline of their number after the civil wars had imparted still greater concentration to this feeling; and, claiming complete equality among themselves, they hesitated to acknowledge a superior even in the emperor. To an Æmilius, a Calpurnius, a Lepidus, or a Piso the son of an Octavius was still no more than a plebeian imperator, raised to power by the breath of the commonalty. His pretensions to legitimate right they despised and repudiated. They had marked

perhaps with peculiar jealousy the alliance of a plebeian Octavius with one of their own houses, the Claudian, the nobility of which it was impossible to gainsay; but this served only to convert their disdain into antagonism and hatred. Each of them conceived that he had as good or better right to rule than the upstart whom fortune had placed in the ascendant. Piso deemed himself at least the natural equal of Tiberius; and his consort Plancina, herself of similar birth and pretensions to his own, fortified his pride and stimulated his ambition. Piso believed himself appointed to be a check upon Germanicus, and Plancina may have been instructed by Livia, with whom she was intimate, to play the rival to his consort Agrippina. No doubt the political jealousies of the men were aggravated by the domestic jealousies which reigned among the women in the palace.

Against the murmurs and intrigues of the class of discontented nobles the emperors found it necessary to defend themselves by special means of repression. Under their administration the law of Majesty was the legal protection thrown round the person of the chief of the state. The first enactment, indeed, which received this title, half a century before the foundation of the empire, was actually devised as a special security for the tribunate. The crime of Majesty was first specified by the demagogue Saturninus, in the year 654, to guard or exalt the dignity of the champion of the plebs. B.C. 100. An attempt against the prerogatives of this popular officer was declared to be an assault on the dignity of the commonwealth itself; to detract from the majesty of the tribune was regarded as constructive treason against the state. It became the object of the oligarch Sulla to baffle this movement, and to restrict the crime of Majesty more closely to hostile efforts against the commonwealth itself; and Cæsar, though generally opposed to the principles of the Sullan legislation, took no step, apparently, to reverse this magnanimous policy. Augustus, indeed, extended the law of his predecessor, and included in his definition of the crime the publication of pasquinades against the emperor, as a mode of bringing the person of the ruler into contempt. But Augustus was anxious for the most part to put off the moment when the people should regard the law of treason merely as a device for the ruler's security. Tiberius felt no such confidence in himself, and he was justified, as we have seen, in having still less confidence in his subjects. Under this ruler accordingly the person of the emperor begins to be the great subject of the law of treason. Circumstances had changed; popular opinion had become fatally modified. The emperor is now in the

world what the gods are in Olympus—a being to be revered and feared simply for himself, without regard to his attributes or the qualities he may be supposed to embody. Attempts on his life become heinous crimes, only to be compared with sacrilege against the blessed divinities. Not only such overt acts, however, but any conduct or language which could be construed into the compassing of his death, became involved in the crime and penalties of treason. Rome was full of soothsayers or magicians, who pretended to communicate a knowledge of future events. To ‘inquire into the years’ of the emperor was now reputed treasonable: the man who sought to ascertain beforehand the day of the emperor’s death must have some illicit interest in the event; he must cherish the hopes of a traitor in his heart. Not pasquinades and injurious publications only, but abusive language, fell under the same definition. Even from the early days of the Tiberian principate cases continually occurred in which the Roman nobles, both men and women, were made amenable to this comprehensive law, which was gradually extended to embrace any sort of act which could be construed to imply disregard for the sacred majesty of Cæsar and of those most closely connected with him.

A law so sweeping and indefinite, and commonly enforced with excessive severity, threw a cloud of insecurity over all life in the higher classes. It created and encouraged the system of delation, which became a marked feature of the imperial polity. Spies and informers swarmed throughout the forum, the curia, and the houses of the nobility. The law awarded them a large share in the confiscated fortunes of the victims they brought to justice. Not only did men of the best families degrade themselves by adopting the trade of the ‘delator,’ they indemnified themselves for the silence which the empire imposed upon political debate by thrusting themselves into the law courts and denouncing with all the artifices of rhetoric the men they selected for their accusations. The prosecution of such charges became the readiest road to fame, to emoluments, and to honours. Tiberius appreciated the service these parasites rendered him, and did not fail to favour and encourage even while he sometimes affected to repress them. It was the great secret of his statecraft, as long as he deigned to keep terms with law and justice, to set the nobles against one another as spies and prosecutors. Thus, and only thus, he was enabled, at least for some years, to throw a decent veil of probity and moderation over the studied cruelty with which he broke down the independence of the class he feared and hated.

CHAPTER LV.

Tiberius brings forward his son Drusus—Sejanus rises in his favour, removes Drusus by poison, and aspires to the hand of his widow, Livilla—Induces Tiberius to withdraw to Capreae, and intrigues against Agrippina—Death of Livia, A.D. 29—Banishment of Agrippina—Confinement of her son Drusus—Sejanus appointed consul for five years—He begins to lose favour with Tiberius, and is craftily overthrown—His death, and proscription of his family and friends—Tiberius approaches Rome, but returns—His cruelty and revolting licentiousness—Insanity imputed to the blood of the Claudii—Despair of the noble Romans—Suicide of Cocceius Nerva and Arruntius—Death of the younger Drusus—Remaining princes of the imperial family, Tiberius Claudius, Caius, and Tiberius Gemellus—Last days and death of the emperor Tiberius—His personal and political character—General prosperity of the empire under his government.—(A.D. 20–37.)

THE death of Germanicus constituted a crisis in the career of Tiberius. The emperor had done good service to the state, both in his military and his civil capacity, while he served under the command of Augustus; but neither as a captain nor as a statesman had he exhibited ability for supreme rule. He suffered under serious defects of temper; he was reserved, morose, shy, distrustful of himself and others, and jealous of the qualities which he was conscious that he most wanted himself. He was jealous, no doubt, of the gallant Germanicus, and of the high favour in which he was held by the Roman people. After that prince's decease he was hardly less jealous of the favour in which they held his widow Agrippina, who brought his ashes to Rome and deposited them in the mausoleum of Augustus, surrounded by the numerous offspring of a happy marriage. At the same time the process of Piso revealed to him the smothered discontent of his nobles, while the ardour of the informers and the accusers discovered the means by which it might be systematically baffled. His own son Drusus still remained to him as a support and a consolation; but he does not seem to have regarded the youth in either of these lights. Drusus had been employed in military affairs without intermission, and his conduct, if in no respect brilliant, had not been destitute of promise. The Romans, indeed, did not lavish upon him the love they had vainly devoted to Germanicus. They were rather inclined to detract from such merits as he had, and to ascribe to him vices which possibly he had not; but, with the view we must take of the character of Tiberius, the indisposition of the people towards him could hardly have injured

him in his father's favour. Tiberius had now recalled him to Rome, and brought him forward in civil employments, bestowing upon him the consulship, and finally the tribunician power, by which he virtually associated him in the empire with himself. But it was not on Drusus that he really leant for support. On the contrary, his jealous temper impelled him to thwart and check his natural supporter by the intervention of a more intimate though less avowed favourite. The man on whom the emperor relied was now *Ælius Sejanus*, a courtier of no high distinction in birth, accomplishments, or abilities, but who was rather recommended to him by this very want of distinction. Sejanus was, however, in command of the prætorian bands, the garrison of the city and the body-guard of the prince, and was thereby constituted not only the protector of his person but the instrument of his most violent actions.

Sejanus conceived the daring ambition of securing to himself the reversion of the imperial power. It was evident that henceforth the government would descend in the family of the reigning Cæsar, and he determined to destroy the family, and leave it open to the Cæsar to make an independent appointment. The nearest in the order of succession was the young Drusus. Sejanus found means of removing him by poison; for of all the reported poisonings which successively occurred in the imperial house this was one of which the least question seems to have been entertained. Sejanus, we are assured, had debauched Livilla, a sister of Germanicus, the wife of Drusus; he had divorced his own consort, Apicata, and had promised marriage to his paramour on the death of her husband. He seems to have hoped to rise in this way into the line of the succession, and there is reason to surmise that Tiberius had given some countenance to his aspirations; but the emperor shrank from finally consenting to the union, and the career of Sejanus received a check which he might in prudence have profited by. But though baffled in this direction he promptly set to work in another. He exerted all his influence to induce his master to withdraw from the vexations of public life at Rome and settle himself in the voluptuous retreat of Capræ, while he committed to his minister the general management of affairs. At the same time he inspired him with constant dread of Agrippina, the widow of Germanicus, and of the intrigues he imputed to her and her rising family. Agrippina, on her part, lived in constant fear of Tiberius; nor did her vehement spirit suffer her to conceal it. On one occasion she besought his permission to a second marriage, in order, as she avowed, to secure herself a pro-

lector; on another she refused some viands offered her at his own table by his own hand, as if apprehensive of poison.

Nevertheless, tormented as he was by his own alarms and by his kinswoman's ill-humour, Tiberius did not neglect the duty he owed to the family of Germanicus. He married that prince's daughter, a younger Agrippina, to a noble of the highest distinction, Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus, from whom sprang, indeed, the future emperor Nero. He was constrained perhaps by the influence of his own mother, Livia, which to the last he was unable to shake off. The empress had used all her power over Augustus to maintain her son in his good graces, and at the crowning moment of her husband's last illness it was perhaps to her adroitness that he owed his quiet succession to the imperial inheritance. Tiberius had always acknowledged his deep obligations to her, and had allowed her almost to share the throne. To her public letters were addressed, and by her public documents were signed. She received the title of Augusta by the testament of her husband, and was only excluded from exhibiting herself in the Senate and placing herself at the head of the armies, an Oriental state for which the Romans were not yet prepared. But Tiberius chafed under these pretensions, and latterly mustered courage to forbid her to take part in public affairs, while he withdrew himself to Capreæ, and left Sejanus in sole possession of all ostensible power. At last Livia died, in the year 29, in U.C. 782. her eighty-second, or, as some compute, in her eighty-sixth A.D. 29. year. The satisfaction of Tiberius was hardly disguised. He took no part in the ceremony of her funeral, and forbade her consecration, which the Senate had obsequiously proposed. The deification of a woman would at that period have been a headlong step in impiety; in the next generation it was easily effected in the case of Livia and of other women also.

The decease of the empress-mother is regarded as another critical moment in the career of Tiberius. Her influence, weakened as it latterly was, continued to the end to exercise some restraint upon the evil passions to which he now wholly surrendered himself. The star of Sejanus was still in the ascendant. The emperor's confidence in this favourite had been confirmed by the devotion with which he seemed on a certain occasion to have exposed his own life for the protection of his master. He had made himself more and more useful to the emperor; the affairs of state seemed to move quietly and easily under his control; the recluse of Capreæ could securely indulge in the moody caprice which drove him out of

society and chained him to the miserable pleasures of the brutal sensuality to which he surrendered himself.

The first incident that marked the withdrawal of Livia's protection from the nearest objects of her son's jealousy was the arrival of a harsh despatch from Tiberius to the Senate directed against the elder Agrippina and her child Nero. The emperor complained of the personal dissoluteness of his grand-nephew, while he reproved the mother for the violence of her language and demeanour. The senators were perplexed, not knowing by what step to gratify the real wishes of their master, who refrained from indicating the measures he would have them employ. But the people assembled before their doors, bearing aloft the effigies of their favourites, and shouting aloud that the letter was a forgery. Their cries pointed to Sejanus as the contriver of a foul conspiracy; but he, perceiving his danger, played dexterously upon the fears of the emperor, representing the movement as an act of treason, till he induced Tiberius to issue a distinct injunction to the Senate to inquire into the political conduct of the widow and her children. Sejanus triumphed; accusers sprang up at his beck; the process was vehemently carried through, and the mother and her son were banished to the barren islands of Pandateria and Pontia. True to the indomitable ferocity of her character, Agrippina resisted the attempt to remove her, and it is said that she even lost an eye in a personal struggle with the centurion. Two other of her sons remained, a Drusus and a Caius; and these Tiberius retained about his own person at Caprææ; for he still acknowledged the policy of keeping some of the imperial family in store, as it were, to check the aspirations of mere strangers. But Sejanus was advancing in his projects and in his audacity. He seduced Lepida, the wife of the younger Drusus, as he had tampered with the wife of the elder Drusus before, and by her instrumentality prevailed on the emperor to drive the prince away from the shelter of his own residence, and thrust him into a dungeon beneath the vaults of the imperial palace in the city.

Some of the nearest friends of Agrippina, and particularly Asinius Gallus, soon fell under the proscription, though Gallus was detained three years in confinement before the tyrant could make up his mind to have him executed, saying, with a brutal sneer, that he had not yet become so far reconciled to him. Sejanus meanwhile seemed to be rising still higher in favour. He was appointed consul together with the emperor himself; he was allowed to entertain the hope of securing Livilla for his consort, and seems, indeed, to have

been actually betrothed to her, and we find him mentioned in our authorities as the brother-in-law of the emperor. It seems probable, however, that this was a blind, and that Tiberius was already meditating the overthrow of a favourite who had grown too powerful. He looked not without dismay upon the man who, while he was himself buried in his obscure retreat, was performing the office of the consul at Rome, as if he were the sole ruler of affairs. Sejanus, the Romans eagerly whispered, was emperor of Rome, while Tiberius was lord of one island merely. The senators, however, crowded about the leader of their debates with every demonstration of devotion. The people, he still believed, rejoiced in his sovereign sway, and when a decree of the Senate conferred on him the joint consulate for five years he regarded it as a formal surrender of the government into his hands.

Tiberius, however, was preparing the favourite's downfall. Resigning the consulship himself at the end of a few months, as was his usual custom, he required Sejanus to give way also to a successor. Sejanus became uneasy. He sought a personal interview with his patron, under pretence of a visit to his affianced bride, who was residing at Capreæ. But to this demand Tiberius returned a refusal, pretending that he was about to return himself with his family to Rome. This repulse was followed by a decree in which Sejanus appeared to be significantly slighted. The courtiers seemed to be already anticipating his disgrace. On the other hand, another of the children of Germanicus, the young Nero, was removed from his path by sudden death, and, as was believed, by a cruel murder; and Tiberius continued to drop hints of his own failing health, to suspend the treason which he supposed him to meditate. The Romans, however, were persuaded that the minister was too impatient, and felt too insecure, to trust to further delay. He contrived a plot for the emperor's assassination as soon as he should arrive within his reach at Rome. Tiberius obtained all the proofs he required, but still hesitated to act, or prepared his blow with more than usual delay and artifice. He confided his design to Macro, an officer of his body-guard, whom he commissioned to take the command of the prætorians, and, if necessary, to lead forth the captive Drusus from his dungeon and place him at their head. He directed him to confer with the consuls, on whom he thought he could depend, and have the Senate promptly convened. Sejanus was thrown off his guard by the assurance that new honours were to be conferred upon him; that he was to be invested with the

tribunician power; in fact, to be associated in the empire. He composed himself to endure the long preamble of the imperial despatch, such as had often before taxed his patience, but never so much as on this fatal occasion. It commenced with a passing reference to various affairs of state; then diverged to a gentle reproof of Sejanus himself for some trifling neglect; thence wandered again to more general subjects, mingled with strange and, as it seemed, fantastic complaints of the solitude of the poor old Cæsar, and his precarious position. It required one of the consuls to bring a military force to Capreæ, and escort the princeps in safety to the city. For some time the senators had been growing uneasy, not knowing what upshot to expect. One by one they slunk away from the minister's side, and left him wondering and irresolute. The agitation of the assembly grew more marked. Sejanus looked anxiously around. Suddenly he found himself closely thronged by the chiefs of the Senate and prevented from moving, while the missive was brought to a close by a strong appeal to the consuls to arrest him as a traitor. While this scene was being enacted Macro had seized the command of the prætorians. Sejanus was borne away from the Palatine to the Mamertine dungeon, and already as he passed along, he could see the demolition of his statues with ropes and hatchets. He was immediately strangled in the depths of his prison, and his body dragged to the Gemonian stairs U.C. 784. under the Capitol for public exposure. His family, his A.D. 81. kinsmen, and friends shared his fate in a general massacre, and the Roman people of all ranks trampled exultingly upon his remains.

Tiberius, however, on his solitary rock had suffered hours of intense anxiety. During the interval of suspense he seemed altogether unnerved. He had disposed a system of telegraphic communication from Rome to Capreæ; and while he watched the concerted signals a squadron of the swiftest triremes lay ready to waft him if required to the legions of Gaul or Syria. Hardly less afraid to follow up his blow than in the first instance to strike it, he was content to watch from his retreat—which he did not for several months venture to quit—the proceedings of the Senate against all who could be deemed his enemies. The proscription that followed extended far and wide, and was accompanied with the greatest horrors. Livilla, whether guilty or not of the death of her husband Drusus, perished, it may be believed, by the express command of the emperor himself.

For a moment the citizens may have indulged the hope that

their ruler, saved from the machinations of a worthless favourite, would return into their midst, and prove himself once more the able, if not amiable, chief to whom they had so long entrusted the fortunes of the empire. Early in the year 32 A.D. Tiberius ^{U.C. 785.} crossed the narrow strait which separates Capreæ from ^{A.D. 32.} Surrentum, and made a progress along the Campanian coast, as if about to revisit the capital. But the ardent greeting they seem in their newly-awakened confidence to have reserved for him was destined never to be tendered. They were surprised perhaps to hear that his excessive timidity had induced him to quit the land and take refuge on board a galley, which bore him up the Tiber, while guards attended on his progress and rudely cleared away the spectators from either bank. Such was the strange fashion in which he ascended the river as far as Cæsar's gardens and the Naumachia of Augustus; but on reaching this spot and coming once more beneath the hills of Rome, he suddenly turned his prow without landing, nor did he pause in his retreat till he regained his island. This extraordinary proceeding, the effect of fear or disgust, caused deep mortification. It was followed by indignant murmurs, and ascribed to the foulest motives. He slunk, it was asserted, from the sight of the good and pure to the obscurity of his own detestable orgies; he was the patron of panders, the sport of minions; he was drunk with wine and drunk with blood; the details which were freely circulated of his cruelty and licentiousness were coloured from the most loathsome scenes of the stews and the slave-market.

It has been commonly suggested by modern writers that there may have been a touch of insanity in the conduct of Tiberius at this period. The blood of the Claudii seems to have been tainted through many generations with an hereditary vice, sometimes showing itself in extravagant pride and insolence, at other times in ungovernable violence; and the whole career of Tiberius, from his youth upwards, in his abrupt alternations of control and indulgence, of labour and dissipation, might actually lead to the unsettlement of his mental powers. It may be well to note this conjecture here, for the same reasoning will apply to other descendants of the same family, of whom we shall hear presently; but it should be said that we receive no intimations of the kind from ancient sources. The notion of the insanity of Tiberius and some of his successors is merely a modern refinement. The ancients were content to remark the facts of the case, and pointed to the retributive justice which followed upon his crimes. 'What to write to you,' he had said to

the Senate, 'or how not to write, or what to forbear from writing, the gods confound me worse than I feel day by day confounded, if I know.' So had his crimes and abominations, says the historian Tacitus, redounded to his own punishment. 'Not in vain,' he goes on to moralise, 'was the wisest of philosophers wont to maintain that, could the hearts of tyrants be disclosed, we should behold in them the direst wounds and ulcers; for the mind is torn with cruelty, lust, and evil inclinations not less truly than the body by blows.'

But the despair of the noblest of the Romans kept pace with that of their tyrant. From this period dates a long succession of suicides, which became a conspicuous feature in their history. Cocceius Nerva was an adviser of the emperor, a man held in high repute as a legal authority, whose character and attainments constituted him a stony support of the Cæsarian government. His fortunes were flourishing, his favour stood at the highest, his health of body was unimpaired by advancing years, his mind mature and vigorous. He had no outward cause of chagrin, none of apprehension for the future. Yet this man, it was announced, had formed the resolution of terminating his own existence. Tiberius sought his chamber when he was calmly awaiting his end by starvation in the midst of his sorrowing friends. He reasoned with him, urged and entreated him, but in vain. Nerva waived all discussion upon the subject, and persisted in his determination. It was averred that the sage's mind had been filled with utter distress at the state of public affairs, and that he had resolved to escape by his own act from the degradation attending upon it. The suicide of Arruntius, which occurred about the same period, is a case of nearly equal significance.

The young Drusus who had been confined in the vaults of the imperial palace was not suffered long to linger there. It was perhaps from some superstitious feeling that Tiberius in this, as in other cases, abstained from the shedding of a prisoner's blood or effecting his death by direct means. But, according to the story as it is circumstantially related, he caused all aliment to be denied him, and suffered him to perish of starvation. This, indeed, was the mode of death which the Romans now not uncommonly chose when constrained to put an end to their existence, and to this death Agrippina is said to have voluntarily resigned herself, under the pangs of her multiplied bereavements and her protracted exile. It was thus, through his own perverseness and cruelty, that the emperor, now verging towards the end of his career, found him-

U.C. 786.

A.D. 33.

self supported by only three surviving males of the lineage of Cæsar, and none of these gave any promise of political ability, or had received any training in public life. It was reported, indeed, that he had given vent to his morose temper with the memorable quotation from a tragic writer: 'After my death perish the world in fire!' But a Roman emperor could not be so indifferent to the future, for his own security depended on the persuasion of his people that on his decease there was a designated successor ready to occupy his place, and cut off the hopes of any casual aspirant. Of the three princes among whom the world might look for its next master, if disposed to accept the ordinary rules of inheritance, Tiberius Claudius Drusus, born in 744 (B.C. 10), was the last of the sons of the eldest Drusus, and nephew of the reigning emperor, by whom he had been adopted on his father's death, at the desire of Augustus. He was reputed to be weak both in health and understanding. Like Agrippa Postumus he was excluded from public affairs, and all political instruction purposely withheld from him. Yet he was not perhaps destitute of talents, and devoted himself to the study and the composition of books. But it was to his backwardness and apparent stupidity that he probably owed his life. The emperor disregarded, and the people altogether forgot him. Two other princes remained, both younger than this Claudius—Caius, the youngest son of Germanicus, and Tiberius, surnamed Gemellus, the child of the second Drusus, both similarly connected with the emperor as his sons by adoption. Of these Caius was born in the year 765 (A.D. 12), and Tiberius in 772. The emperor had abstained from claiming for them high public functions, but he had appointed them co-partners in his private heritage, which was equivalent at least to a strong recommendation of their pretensions to empire. The elder of the two princes was not unmoved by the prospect thus opened to him. He knew himself to be a favourite with the legions as the son of Germanicus; as a child he had been introduced into the camps on the Rhine, and had received from the soldiers the nickname of Caligula, from the *caliga*, or military buskin, in which he had been attired. Under the shadow of the palace he learnt to dissemble from his early years; he paid his court sedulously to the tyrant, and it could be said of him at a later period that no man was ever a better servant or a worse master.

The end of Tiberius was now visibly approaching; but he steadily refused to disclose his views regarding the imperial inheritance. He still owed his safety to the protection of Macro, and he

dared not make a declaration which might turn this minister into an enemy, or direct his attention from his own person to that of his destined successor. The story that the dying emperor left the choice to fortune, by declaring that he would bequeath the empire to the one of his children who should first choose to enter his chamber, coming from the Jewish historian Josephus, may be dismissed from our attention as an Oriental romance. The more sober narratives of the Roman historians allude to no such designation. The story, indeed, of the closing days of Tiberius is related in much detail. To the last he maintained his inveterate habit of reserve and dissimulation. The imminence of his dissolution was revealed through the clever artifice of his physician; but at the last it remained a question whether his death was natural, or whether it was hastened at least by the direction of Macro, who, when it was for a moment

A.U. 790.
A.D. 37. thought that he would rally from a fainting-fit, caused him to be smothered in blankets heaped upon him. However this may be, the spirit of the old tyrant finally passed away on March 16, A.D. 37.

The character of Tiberius was execrated by the Romans, and their execrations have been echoed, not undeservedly, by all posterity. It is of little matter to be able to point out the steps by which this character grew worse and worse to the end; there can be no doubt that it was bad from the beginning. For cruelty and debauchery no man perhaps in history has attained a name so detestable. Nor would it be worth while to point out the circumstances which may, to some extent, palliate the excesses so justly abominated. It is important, however, to remark that the crimes and vices of this monster were, for the most part, personal and private, that his evil influence was shed upon the Senate and the higher class of society in Rome, but had little effect, and was indeed scarcely perceived, in the wider circuit of the provinces. It may be said that the Roman empire, as a whole, flourished more prosperously, more securely, and with more peaceful dignity during the reign of Tiberius than perhaps in any other period. Her arms were everywhere respected, but seldom required to be exercised. Whenever they were put forth they were uniformly and promptly successful. Disturbances on the borders of Numidia and Mauretania were put down, and the peace of Africa finally consolidated. The influence of the Druids in fomenting sedition in Gaul was overthrown and extinguished. If no new conquests were made beyond the Rhine and Danube, the Germans were withheld from any attempt at aggres-

sion, and the manners and arts of Rome continued to advance into the heart of the hostile territory. The Parthians were awed into a tacit acknowledgment of Roman superiority. The kingdom of Palestine was definitively annexed to the dominions of Rome, and the Jewish people did not fail to recognise the blessings they enjoyed from the milder and more equable rule she wielded, after the violence and feverish tyranny of their native sovereigns. It was made a reproach to the government of Tiberius that he left the commanders in the provinces sometimes for several years together unchanged; and this neglect was imputed to his supineness or perhaps his jealousy. But the old system of the republic, under which the proconsuls held their office for one or two or three years only, however profitable to the class from which they were selected, had proved grossly oppressive to the provincials, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that Tiberius consulted the good of his subjects in purposely extending the term of office. On the whole, if Rome herself suffered more under this emperor's rule than at any previous epoch—and such may really have been the case—it may be surmised that the same period was one of exceptional felicity to the great bulk of the Roman empire.

CHAPTER LVI.

Caius, surnamed Caligula, succeeds to the empire—Good promise of his early reign—His popularity—His weakly constitution broken by dissipation—His prodigality and cruelty—Loss of his sister Drusilla—His mind unsettled—His logical idea of the sovereign rule—Grandioseness of his conceptions—His architectural freaks—The bridge at Baiæ—His expedition into Gaul politic and courageous—Menaces Britain—His triumph for pretended victories—Conspiracy of Chærea—He is assassinated.—(A.D. 37–41.)

CAIUS CÆSAR, or CALIGULA, as he is more commonly designated in history, was now in his twenty-fifth year. He was a candidate for supreme power while as yet he had exercised none of the subordinate functions of government. His constitution was weakly. In his childhood he had been subject to fits, and was still often seized with sudden faintings. His brain was excitable; he seemed to labour under constant fever. It was said of him, at least at a later period, that he never slept three hours together. He would roam through the long corridors of the palace at night, shouting impatiently for the dawn; or if he slumbered his dreams were wild and terrible. There were many symptoms of madness in his temperament, inhe-

rited, if we may so suppose, with his Claudian blood, and these could not fail to be fatally nourished by the excesses of debauchery in which he ultimately plunged.

But the Roman people were little acquainted with the young prince's infirmities, and they were delighted at the prospect of exchanging the moroseness of the old tyrant they had lost for the youth, the affected courtesy, and the brilliant promises of the aspirant whom Macro introduced to them. The Senate accepted him as the favourite of the army. All the functions of sovereignty were lavishly heaped upon him; and when he declined the title of 'Father of his country,' his modesty redoubled the acclamations of his subjects. At the same time he made ample promise of gifts and largesses; he issued a general pardon to the occupants of the imperial prisons, and recalled the banished from their exile. He burnt before the eyes of the people the informations he had received of treasonable practices, and proscribed the delators and other panders to the vices and cruelties of his predecessor. He restored to circulation the pamphlets of the patriots Labienus, Cremutius, and Cassius Severus, which the Senate had suppressed, declaring that it was for the interest of every good prince that history should be written and read. He revised the roll of the Senate and the knights, bestowing his liberality wherever it seemed to be merited; and finally he restored the comitia for the election of the chief magistrates with blind and certainly unavailing magnanimity; for neither the candidates nor the people valued the privilege, and the nomination of the emperor was again accepted by common consent. The piety of the young ruler was naturally applauded when he conveyed the remains of his mother and brother from their distant resting-places, and caused them to be solemnly bestowed in the imperial mausoleum; nor were the citizens less pleased when U.C. 790. B.C. 37. he refrained from pressing for the confirmation of the Acts of Tiberius, and allowed the Senate to refuse him the honours of apotheosis.

That there were some germs of kindliness and generosity in the young stripling's character needs not to be disputed. On accepting the consulship he made a popular address, declaring how he would devote himself to the conduct of public affairs; and for the two months that followed he seems to have striven assiduously to redeem his pledge. Untrained as he was, and immoderate alike in every caprice, he threw himself, perhaps, into this work with feverish impetuosity. The just and liberal measures, actually connected

with his name, may be generally referred to this brief period. The labour was probably beyond his strength. On the arrival of his birthday, on the 1st of August, he relaxed from his industry to indulge in lavish hospitality. The magnificence he now displayed in consecrating a temple to Julius, the founder of his race, had not been witnessed for at least two generations. The ceremony was conducted by Caius himself in a triumphal chariot; the sacrifices, the hymns, the banquets, the shows improved upon the highest traditional models, the emperor presiding over the sports with his sisters at his side, surrounded by the priests and flamens of the Augustan hero worship.

But this sudden change from business to enjoyment was a fatal one. Resigning in the third month the chair of magistracy, Caius rushed for recreation into the wildest dissipations. His enthusiasm for the public spectacles was the frenzy of one just escaped from a hermitage. Soon sated with every fresh object, he sought renewed excitement in variety and strangeness. He let fall the mask, so loosely worn, of discretion and modesty, and revelled furiously in the grossest voluptuousness. But his weak constitution could not bear the strain. He was soon prostrated by severe illness, which was so much the worse for him, as it disclosed the vast space he actually filled in the interests and affections of a people for whom he did not really care. He became persuaded on his recovery that his existence was acknowledged to be necessary to the empire, and he was himself induced to regard it as something sacred and divine. With this feeling he had no scruple in taking any measures which his own safety might seem to him to require, nor did he long delay to put to death the young Tiberius, whom he had already cozened out of his share in the imperial inheritance.

After the murder of the prince his kinsman the next step of the young tyrant, who was rapidly becoming an adept in statecraft, was to rid himself of the onerous protection of his benefactor Macro. With the fate of Macro was associated that of his consort Ennia, who had sought to consolidate her husband's influence by surrendering herself to the emperor's passion. Both fell by the hands of the executioner without accusation or process of any kind, and such was the simple mode of destroying obnoxious personages that came from this time into vogue, and was admitted apparently without a murmur. Macro and his wife were mean and vulgar culprits; but the citizens must have lost all sense of self-respect when they witnessed the death of Silanus, one of the most illustrious of their nobles, and the

father-in-law of the emperor himself, who, after his daughter's decease, fell into disfavour, was first deprived of his military command in Africa, threatened with impeachment, and, when the orator charged with the accusation shrank from the odious task, was summarily commanded to kill himself. It is probable that in this, as in other instances which quickly followed, the emperor, who had lavished the large treasure accumulated by Tiberius, was prompted by the requirements of his ever-increasing extravagance.

The feelings of the profligate, thus hardened in cruelty, were suddenly embittered by a domestic loss which seems to have helped to shatter his reason. Caius had three sisters; the scandalous rumours of the day insinuated that he indulged in incestuous commerce with each of them; it can hardly be doubted but that one, Drusilla, was the object of a vicious passion. During his late illness he had actually named her as the heiress of his honours and official dignities. On her death, which followed immediately upon his own recovery, he was plunged into despair. He appointed her a funeral of extraordinary magnificence, and commanded that all business should be suspended on pain of death. He engaged the Senate to decree her divine honours. She was to bear in heaven the title of Panthea, the universal divinity, and her worship was enjoined on all the cities of Italy and the provinces. A citizen was found to swear that he had beheld her ascend into heaven, whereupon the

U.C. 791. crazy monster declared that if any man dared to mourn
A.D. 38. for her death he should be punished, for she had become a goddess; if anyone rejoiced at her deification he should be punished also, for she was dead.

The idea was no doubt logical, but, as may sometimes happen, it was logic pushed to absurdity. Such, indeed, was the character of this emperor's mind: he had had no training for affairs to teach him the difference between the logical and the practical. Augustus and Tiberius had learnt in the school of experience the policy of allowing their subjects to indulge in a dream of independence after they had lost the reality. Caius, when he found himself the master of a legion of slaves, felt no shame nor scruple in asserting his power and exacting their devotion. He despised as ignoble the caution of his predecessors in disclaiming the full acknowledgment of their undoubted prerogatives. He regarded himself not as a prince or emperor, but as a king, and he had learnt what was kingly rule from the examples of Oriental sovereignties, and particularly from Herod Agrippa, then ruling over

Judea, with whom he had been brought up in the palace of Tiberius. A grotesque instance is given of his habit of thus pushing reason to practical extremes, in the case of the priest of Diana at Aricia, who was reputed to hold his office on the tenure of defending it against any aggressor, for anyone might slay him and seize upon it. If so wild an usage had ever actually existed we may be sure that it had long fallen into desuetude. But the story rendered current by the credulity of popular antiquarians excited the curiosity and horror of the vulgar; and Caius, as a shrewd proscriber of all hollow pretensions, affected indignation that the actual incumbent of the office should enjoy his dignity unassailed. He instigated, we are assured, a stronger man to seek him in the sacred grove, and required him to defend his preferment with his life.

It was one of the conceptions of imperial greatness that fastened itself on the uneasy mind of Caius, that everything he did and everything connected with him should be grandiose in style. After the death of two of his wives and the divorce of a third, he chose a fourth, named Cæsonia, who became his favourite, for her size rather than her beauty. He is said to have complained that his epoch was signalized by no public calamities on the scale of the Varian massacre under Augustus, or the fall of the theatre of Fidenæ at which 50,000 persons are said to have perished, in the last reign. On one occasion, when provoked by the indifference of the multitude to some of his shows, he uttered the extravagant exclamation, 'Would that the people of Rome had but one neck!' He executed great architectural undertakings, completing the temple of Augustus, which Tiberius had never cared to finish, restoring the theatre of Pompeius, and laying the foundations at least of an amphitheatre of his own. He designed and began the noble aqueduct which bore the name of Aqua Claudia, a work of manifest utility, in which he followed the old Roman tradition of conveying water in a conduit above-ground on a vast succession of arches of brick or stone, which might have been quite as well transmitted, at the least possible expense, through pipes beneath the soil. One of his most extravagant freaks was the throwing of a bridge from his enlarged residence on the Palatine to the opposite eminence of the Capitol, in order, as he said, to make him next neighbour to Jupiter, with whom he claimed equal divinity. The account we have received of this structure is quite indefinite, nor do any traces remain whereby its exact direction or character can be ascertained. It may be conjectured that it consisted of a gallery thrown from one roof to

another of certain basilicas and temples which intervened between the northern angle of the one hill and the south-eastern face of the other.

The most remarkable, however, of all these creations was the bridge which Caius constructed across the bay of Baiæ, from Bauli to Puteoli. It seems that there existed already a natural spit of land on the one side and a mole of 1,200 feet in length on the other; and if an excuse be required for what may have been a mere act of caprice, it is possible that the emperor may have conceived the plan of making a secure roadstead within the recess of the bay. Agrippa, indeed, had previously constructed such a harbour in the same locality, but on a smaller scale. But after all the design of Caius extended only to connecting the two points by a bridge of boats, a structure fragile and precarious at the best. This purpose he effected, and led a body of troops in triumph along the roadway which he built high and broad with solid earth and stonework. His triumph ended in a disastrous accident, by which crowds of the spectators suffered drowning, the tyrant, it is maliciously asserted, enjoying the spectacle, and forbidding them to be rescued. It does not appear that the bridge was ever used again. It seems to have speedily perished, and little trace remains of it either on the spot itself or in the records of the period.

Among the tasteless extravagances of the day none reached a greater height at this period than that of the table. The vulgar rich did not now surround themselves with the graces of luxury; it was their pride to amaze their guests with what was simply costliest and most difficult of attainment. It was for their rarity only that peacocks and nightingales and the tongues and brains of phœnicopters (possibly flamingoes) could be regarded as delicacies. But in these excesses it was the passion of Caius to surpass all previous examples. He contrived, we are assured, to expend an amount of 80,000*l.* on a single repast; and, having effected this, he could say complacently, 'A man should be frugal except he be a Cæsar.' The vehement ambition to be first in whatever he undertook extended to charioteering as well as to gluttony. Nor was it much better when the prince presented himself to the Senate as an orator, and demanded the applause which was only too sure to follow. His passion for fame degenerated into brutal envy. He caused, we are told, the statues of the heroes of the republic to be cast down, and deprived the images of illustrious houses of the insignia by which they were distinguished, the Cincinnati of their ringlets, the Torquati

of their golden collars. He forbade the last descendant of the great Pompeius to bear the surname of Magnus. Finally, he commanded the works of Virgil and Livy to be removed from public libraries; the one, he said, had neither genius nor learning, the other was a careless blunderer.

Yet Caius, capricious tyrant as he was, could tear himself away from the persecution of the living and the desecration of the dead to undertake an enterprise of some boldness and carry it resolutely into effect. Such undoubtedly was the true character of his expedition into Gaul and to the frontier of the Rhine, in the year A.D. 39.

39. His object no doubt was, not to make an attack upon U.C. 792. the enemies of Rome, or extend the limits of the empire, but to surprise and overthrow one of the provincial governors, Lentulus Gætulicus, who, from his distant camp at Treveri or Colonia, had defied Tiberius, and refused to surrender his command. It is not improbable that this audacious chief had entered into a conspiracy with persons of distinction at Rome against the ruler of the state. The secret of the plot, if such it were, was betrayed, and its leaders seized and cut off in Gaul. The sisters of the emperor were implicated in the process, and condemned to banishment. The account of this expedition is rendered grotesque by various circumstances which have been recorded of it; but whatever follies Caius may have committed, there can be little doubt that the expedition itself was an able and effective stroke of policy.

It is more difficult to attach any serious significance to the second expedition of this prince against Britain. We are told that he penetrated in the following year to the shore of the Channel, at Gesoriacum, or Boulogne, with the intention of making a descent upon the island from which the great Cæsar had withdrawn with so little glory. He had collected his legions for embarkation, and reviewed them himself from a galley at sea; but suddenly with the sound of trumpets he issued the command to pile arms and pick up shells on the beach. Collected in a heap together, these 'spoils of the ocean,' as Caius described them, were sent to Rome, and the Senate was directed to deposit them solemnly among the treasures in the Capitol. We can hardly doubt that there was more in this pretended farce than meets the eye; possibly the British chiefs had made some act of submission; possibly the shells may have been a tribute of jewels from the Rutupian oyster-beds. We must be prepared to find some portion of Roman history disguised at this period in pasquinade.

We are assured, however, whether it be in jest or earnest, that Caius now proclaimed that he had placed his foot upon the ocean, and reduced it to submission for ever. Accordingly he gave orders for preparing a triumph on a scale of unprecedented magnificence. He collected, for lack of veritable captives, a few German slaves or fugitives, or hired the tallest he could obtain of the Gauls, causing them to dye their hair red and let it grow, and learn to babble a few words of the German language. But other matters seem to have intervened which caused delay; the senators neglected to issue the requisite decrees, and when at last, on their master's nearer approach, they roused themselves to make preparations, they found him furious with anger, and full of threats of the vengeance he would execute upon them. 'For the Senate,' he said, 'I will be neither a prince nor a citizen, but,' clapping his hand on his sword, 'an emperor and a conqueror.' He forbade them to come forth to meet him, and waiving the offer of a triumph which they had too long withheld, made his entry with the show of an ovation only, and scattered money to the populace. His demeanour to his nobles grew more insolent and more menacing. To show the mean estimation in which he held them he threatened, it was said, to make his horse a consul. One day, at a public banquet, when the consuls were reclining beside him, he burst suddenly into a fit of laughter; and when they courteously inquired into the cause of his mirth, astounded them by coolly replying that he was thinking how with one word he could cause both their heads to roll on the floor. He amused himself with similar banter even with his favourite, Cæsonia. While fondling her neck he is reported to have said, 'Fair as it is, how easily I could sever it!'

But the end of this monstrous principate was drawing near, not from the general indignation of the Senate or the people, but from resentment at a private affront. The emperor chose to insult a tribune of his prætorians, Cassius Chærea, with injurious language and gestures, imputing to him effeminacy or cowardice. This man resolved on a bloody revenge. He concocted his schemes with a few others, men of no public distinction, but who felt themselves personally aggrieved. There was no design of sacrificing the tyrant, like Julius Cæsar, in the curia, or proclaiming tyranny at an end. The conspiracy, it seems, was whispered to the emperor, who mistook the persons indicated, and was baffled by the constancy of a woman who was examined under torture about it. Still delays occurred and hesitation prevailed. Four days did Caius preside

in the theatre surrounded by the men who had sworn to slay him, but still lacked the courage. At last, as he was passing through a vaulted passage between the palace and the circus, and inspecting a troop of choristers who were engaged to sing upon the stage, Chærea and another tribune, Sabinus, fell suddenly upon him and struck him down. Some of their party crowded upon him, while others kept off his German body-guards, until they had pierced him with thirty wounds and left him dead upon the ground. The assailants all escaped through private passages, and some friendly hands took up the body and thrust it, imperfectly consumed, into a shallow tomb in the Lamian gardens.

U.C. 794.

A.D. 41.

CHAPTER LVII.

Claudius is acknowledged by the prætorians as Emperor, and thrust by them upon the Senate—His timid precautions—His figure and countenance—He is uxorious and gluttonous, but in other respects abstinent and laborious in public affairs—His enlightened policy, and able government of the provinces—Victories of his lieutenants Galba, Corbulo, and Suetonius in Germany and Africa—Aulus Plautius invades Britain—Claudius visits the island in person—Vespasianus reaches the Exe and Severn—Ostorius Scapula defeats Caractacus—Claudius triumphs—Settlement of affairs in the East—Palestine restored to Herod Agrippa—Condition of the Jews in Rome—Their quarrels with the Alexandrians, and with the Christians at Rome—The wives of Claudius—Story of Messalina—Remarks on the sources of the imperial history—The freedmen of the palace—Claudius marries Agrippina, daughter of Germanicus—She intrigues for her son Nero against Britannicus, the son of Messalina—Claudius dies by poison.—(A.D. 41–54.)

THE death of the tyrant was promptly announced to the Senate, as the only existing national council, and voices were heard invoking the name of the Republic, and proposing the restoration of freedom. It was easy to come to an agreement to destroy the infant child of the late Cæsar, together with its mother, Cæsonia, and to decree honours to the assassins, but there the harmony of the assembly ceased. The actual consuls were men of no special mark, the mere creatures and nominees of the emperor. More than one among the nobles started forth, and urged his own superior claims to the appointment, but all was for the moment confusion and indecision. Meanwhile certain of the guards were roaming through the

U.C. 794.

A.D. 41.

palace, and drew from behind the curtains in which he had concealed himself a personage whom they recognised as the feeble Claudius, the uncle of their murdered chief. They led him, with perhaps no definite purpose, to the camp of the prætorians; the soldiers at once seized on the opportunity to extort a largess, and Claudius, more dead than alive with amazement and alarm, was lavish in his promises. The prætorians bore him on their shields into the curia, and peremptorily required the senators to accept him, as the last living representative of the Cæsars. All opposition quailed before the will of the soldiers, and the offices and honours of empire were at once heaped upon the man who up to that day had been deemed unfit to discharge the meanest functions of civil or military government. The collapse of the republican sentiment was as complete as it was sudden. It was just discovered perhaps that Caius had left the treasury and the granaries of the city equally empty; and that if Rome did not appoint an emperor she must accept a dictator. The time had come when the former was deemed the less odious monster of the two.

The liberators of yesterday were sacrificed as criminals on the morrow; but with the death of Chærea and Satinus Claudius professed himself satisfied, and his fears prompted him to propitiate his nobles by kindly and even humble compliance rather than crush them by severe measures of repression. It was well, indeed, that his fears took this turn, for his alarm for his personal safety was excessive and unmanly. It was from this time that the Roman emperors, at least the weakest among them, condescended to the precautions of Oriental tyrants, requiring soldiers to stand around them at their banquets and public receptions, and all who approached them to be examined lest they should bear concealed weapons. Thus reassured, Claudius published a general amnesty, and recalled to their homes many state-exiles. He suffered the wretched sisters of Caius, Julia and Agrippina, to return and resume their intrigues or dissipations. Many instances of his kindness and generosity were popularly recorded. The provinces were favoured no less than the city; the statues which Caius had snatched from Greece and Asia were generally sent back. The honours Claudius paid to the memory of his brother Germanicus, to Augustus and to Livia, were regarded as a pledge that he would take their examples for his model. When by chance a report of his assassination was spread abroad the people were violently excited; they assailed the senators and the soldiers with cries of treason and

parricide, and were not to be appeased till their favourite actually reappeared in person.

The records of Roman history combine in presenting us with a most unfavourable picture of the emperor, both as regards his bodily and his intellectual qualifications. Of the first, indeed, little need be said. Undoubtedly there is no evidence forthcoming on which we can question the account we have received of his feeble health, his shambling gait, his misshapen limbs and figure; though, indeed, numerous busts exist which concur in representing his countenance, albeit handsome and intelligent, yet depressed with an appearance of pain and perplexity of spirit. He was uxorious by temperament, and married a number of wives in succession; but he was singularly free from the libidinous excesses so common among his class and his family. The Romans, whose great men had generally been remarkably abstemious, affected great disgust at his reputed convivial indulgences, but his gluttony was at the worst but a personal failing; he did not lavish the treasures of the empire in indiscriminate and public dissipation. The poverty in which he found himself at the outset of his career of empire was perhaps the best guarantee against such extravagances, for he shrank from replenishing his coffers, like Caius, by the proscription of his nobles and the confiscation of their estates.

But Claudius was not only innocent, as regarded the state, in his personal habits; he set himself diligently to labour for the public weal, and he acquitted himself, if the truth be told, with no little distinction. The ancients, blinded, as it would seem, by the systematic deception of the compilers of the imperial history at that epoch, gave him no credit for the intelligent interest he took in public affairs, nor for the prosperous issue of his measures. It may be shown, however, indubitably that Claudius carried out, as far as the times allowed, the enlightened policy of extending Roman citizenship in the provinces. In this respect he took a larger view of the true requirements of state policy than any of the Cæsars since Julius. In recurring to sumptuary enactments and other antique principles of government he followed at least the example of Augustus, and accepted the conclusions which the ancients generally pronounced to be the wisest. He devoted himself personally to the administration of law, tiring out his judges and assessors by his unwearied application to business; and, indeed, in his conduct of public affairs he was singularly constant and laborious. He may have failed to leave any specific mark of his wisdom or ingenuity;

he may have subjected himself to ridicule not wholly undeserved by the slowness of his intellect or the pedantry of his measures; but it is clearly unfair to stigmatize him, as has been too commonly done, as an imbecile fool tossed upon a throne by a freak of fortune.

We may speak even more confidently of this ruler's success in the conduct of foreign affairs. The government of the provinces seems to have been maintained with vigour, and the governors themselves kept firmly in check by the administration at home. Servius Galba, an able officer of the antique stamp, led his forces across the Rhine and inflicted chastisement on the Chatti. Corbulo, another true Roman captain, gained a victory over the Chauci, and was making preparations for further conquests by the construction of roads and bridges, when he was required to desist from attempting to advance the limits of the empire. The majesty of Rome was vindicated against the Maurusii, a tribe of the still unsettled province of Mauretania. Suetonius Paullinus was the first of the Romans to penetrate the range of the Atlas. But Claudius resolved to execute the plan, which Augustus had prematurely announced, of an invasion and thorough subjugation of the great island of Britain. In the year 43 his lieutenant Aulus

A.D. 43.

A.U. 796. Plautius led a well-appointed army of four legions across the Channel. It is probable that he effected his landing on the coast of Kent, and advanced towards the lowest fords of the Thames. He overcame all resistance, and, crossing that river, awaited the arrival of the Emperor, who chose that the triumph which was to follow should seem to be won by his own personal exertions. The Trinobantes, the people of Essex and Hertfordshire, were quickly subdued; and the base of the Roman command was fixed at their capital, Camulodunum, or Colchester, where a Claudian colony was established, and from whence direct communication was maintained by sea with the Continent.

A.D. 51.

U.C. 804.

Having accomplished this feat in the space of sixteen days—which certainly indicates some vigour and decision of character—the emperor returned to Rome, from whence it was impolitic for the ruler of the empire to be long absent. In his absence the Roman arms made rapid progress. Vespasianus reduced the south-western parts of the island, as far as the Exe and the Severn. Ostorius Scapula advanced to the Wye and the foot of the Welsh mountains, in the country of the Silures. At the entrance into these rugged fortresses he encountered a desperate resistance. The Britons were led by a prince named Caractacus. The site of the famous battle in

which the Britons were utterly routed has not been ascertained. It lay, no doubt, among the gorges which descend into the valley of the Wye or the Severn. Caractacus escaped from the slaughter, but was soon afterwards delivered to the Romans by Cartismandua, queen of the Brigantes. He was sent with his family to Rome, and led in the triumph which Claudius now celebrated in a fashion somewhat different from that of the triumphs of old. He seated himself before the gates of the prætorian camp, attended by a body-guard, and surrounded by the multitude of citizens. His consort, Agrippina, clothed like himself in a military garb, occupied the tribunal at his side, the ensigns of a Roman army floating over his head. Caractacus was allowed to address the emperor in a speech which was not unworthy of a patriot chief; and Claudius, to his great honour, spared him the fate which had befallen the captives of so many imperators before him—such as Pontius the Samnite, and Perseus, and Jugurtha, and Vercingetorix.

Claudius effected also a further settlement of the frontier provinces in the East. The suppliant princes who had thronged the court of Tiberius and Caius were relieved from their attendance, and sent to govern their native realms in dependence upon the sovereign empire. An Antiochus was restored to the throne of Commagene, and a Mithridates, who claimed descent from the great Eastern hero, received a grant of the kingdom of the Bosphorus; while Polemo, its recent occupant, was compensated with a district of Cilicia. Herod Agrippa was confirmed in his sway over Galilee; but Claudius, finding him popular among the Jewish people, and assured of his loyalty to Rome, did not scruple to divest the empire of the province of Palestine and annex it to his dominions. The Jews, who had been alarmed, and were indeed on the brink of rebellion, at the threat of Caius to place his own statue in their temple, welcomed this concession. The return of Agrippa to Jerusalem was celebrated as a national triumph; but when he ventured to strengthen the fortifications of his city this act of sovereignty was promptly forbidden. He well knew the necessity of leaning upon Rome, for his people were divided into two rival factions which neither force nor policy could unite. While the Jewish party were bent fanatically on the maintenance of the ancient customs, and required him to conform to their rites and holy law, the Hellenizers, hardly less numerous and powerful, elevated him above all such usages, and pressed upon him the attributes of divinity. At Jerusalem Agrippa was obliged to enact the Jew; but at Cæsarea he might play the

part of a Greek and a heathen. Here it was that the populace greeted the harangue he addressed them with the cry, 'It is the voice of a god, and not of a man.' But he was smitten, we read, at the same moment with a sore disease, and died after a few days' illness. Rome reverted upon his death to her former U.C. 797.
A.D. 44. policy; the deceased king's son was retained in Italy as a hostage, and the kingdom of Agrippa was annexed once more to the proconsular province of Syria.

The position of the Jewish people resident at this time at Rome requires special notice. For several generations the Jews had been accustomed to roam beyond the narrow limits of their own country. They settled in great numbers in the great cities on the Euphrates; they formed a large portion of the population of Alexandria; they frequented all the marts of commerce in Greece and the islands, and to Rome more especially they flocked, generally with the view of bettering their condition by traffic. At Rome a large class of small pedlars and hucksters of this nation peopled a whole district in the city; but many of the Jews were men and women of great accomplishments, who ingratiated themselves with the highest families, and familiarized them with the peculiar rites and doctrines of their own religion. Julius Cæsar had shown them great favour; Augustus had deigned to extend his patronage to them; under Tiberius they had provoked the government by their turbulence and quarrels among themselves or with their neighbours, and that emperor had severely chastised them by deporting 4,000 of their number to the pestilential swamps of Sardinia. Under Claudius they renewed their contests with their inveterate foes the Alexandrians, then resident together with them in the city. It seems probable that the dissensions between the orthodox Jews and the sect of Christians which was beginning to arise among them exasperated these troubles, and required the strong control of the government. The occurrence of a great scarcity, which rendered the subsistence of the Roman population precarious, was a further reason for the expulsion of the Jews from Rome, decreed by Claudius, though certainly not put strictly in execution.

But the feature in this prince's character which has been rendered the most prominent by the historians, and has made him for the most part a byword for weakness and stupidity, is his subjection to the women whom he made his wives. Of these the first was a Plautia, the second an Ælia, both of whom he found occasion to divorce; the third was the infamous Valeria Messalina, worse and

more ill-fated than either. The irregularity of her conduct has been painted in the most glaring colours, and the art with which she contrived to deceive her husband has been a common theme with prurient satirists. To retain her influence over her weak consort she allied herself with his freedmen and favourites, joined with them in selling appointments and extorting bribes, until, perhaps, she entangled herself in their toils, and fell at last a victim to their machinations. The story of her fall, as reported in all the records of the times, is undoubtedly one of the most striking incidents in Roman history, and must not be omitted in a sketch like this; but some deduction must surely be made from the confidence which we are expected to place in it. We are required to believe that this wicked woman, after indulging herself in the vilest and most promiscuous amours, cast her eyes on a young, a handsome, and a virtuous noble named Silius, and induced him, by the offer of sharing the throne with her, to go through the rite of marriage in due form with every public solemnity. Claudius, it is said, was absent from Rome. All the world knew of the flagrant enormity; he was the last to be informed of the dishonour of his house. When his freedmen at last disclosed it to him they could with difficulty induce him to persist in exacting the due punishment of the crime. Both Silius and Messalina were put to death; but so stolid was the injured husband, that for days after he used to ask for the wife whose death he had forgotten, and wonder at her not appearing at his table. Such is the extraordinary story which the gravest historians stedfastly aver; it is only from one obscure intimation that we seem casually to learn that the marriage was a contrivance of Claudius himself, who, we must suppose, had divorced his wife beforehand, through fear of a soothsayer's announcement that the husband of Messalina was destined to a speedy death. The greatest of the Romans were not superior to such wretched superstitions, and we may well believe that Claudius could be worked upon by intriguers in the palace thus to rid them of a woman whom they might hate or fear.

A.D. 48.
U.C. 801.

But an important consideration depends upon this story. In the narrative of the early history of Rome it has been necessary to pause from time to time and warn the reader that our authorities are little to be depended upon, and that it is from the general complexion of their accounts, rather than from particular relations, that we must gather our conceptions of early Roman affairs. A similar caution must now be given in regard to the history of the Cæsars.

We have been expressly assured that the story of Tiberius was gravely falsified by the writers of the time through fear or hatred, and it is impossible to say how fairly the great historian of the empire, Tacitus, has sifted the contemporary materials which lay before him. But there is distinct reason to believe that the affairs of Claudius were studiously misrepresented. Among the narratives which professed to detail them none were so popularly known as the scandalous memoirs of Agrippina, whose motive in writing them could only be to blast the fame of Messalina, to discredit the memory of Claudius, and to magnify her own merits and those of her son Nero. Whatever she may have advanced in favour of this prince and of herself has been overwhelmed by an opposite wave of adverse testimony, but her evidence against her unfortunate husband—for she succeeded to the vacant place of Messalina—was greedily accepted by the class of political pamphleteers and ribald anecdotists who constituted the historians of the following generation. The history of the Roman emperors, though written under very different circumstances, is hardly more to be relied on than the history of the Roman kings.

On the death of Messalina there ensued a great struggle in the palace for the succession to the imperial couch. Claudius had allowed himself to conduct a great portion of his affairs, both domestic and public, through the agency of his freedmen, all Greeks by nation, and fully endowed with the dexterity and suppleness of their race. The introduction of these foreign ministers into the affairs of state was a novelty in Roman usage, and was justly regarded as an affront to the knights and senators who had been entrusted with such functions by earlier princes. It may be feared that the Romans themselves were becoming more and more incapable of discharging public duties efficiently. So it was that Narcissus, Callistus, and Pallas put forth each a candidate for marriage with the emperor; but Agrippina, who eventually gained the prize, owed it more, it was said, to her special opportunities as the niece of Claudius, and to her own seductive arts, than to the favour even of her powerful champion Pallas. This second heroine of the name was a daughter of Germanicus, and sister of Caius Caligula. The union of uncles with their nieces was repugnant to the feelings and to the laws of the Romans; but at the instance of an obsequious senator the emperor gladly consented to limit the restriction to the daughters of the uncle's sister, whereas Agrippina was the daughter of his brother. Her first object was to compass the

death of Lollia, a divorced consort of Caius, who had now presumed to court alliance with Claudius. But she next devoted all her influence to intriguing for the succession of her son by a former husband, Domitius. She spared no pains, and probably no falsehood, to disgust her facile spouse with the memory of the wretched Messalina, by whom he had a son, to whom he had given the name of Britannicus. At the same time she secured the betrothal of her own son to Octavia, the sister of Britannicus, and engaged the emperor to place him on a level with his own child in every favour and honour he could bestow. The young Domitius, adopted into the imperial family, received the name of Nero. Agrippina took care to assure herself of the support of the army, and founded the military colony of Colonia Agrippinensis at Cologne. Here she had herself been born, here she had stood as a child in the prætorium of her father, Germanicus, who was still held in honour among the veterans of the Rhenish provinces. She assumed a conspicuous place in military spectacles, taking her seat by the emperor's side; it was there she beheld the submission of Caractacus, and also witnessed a grand naval review or combat on the lake Fucinus. Her face was associated with the emperor's on the coinage.

Under the influence of his freedmen and his intriguing consort Claudius was induced to prosecute many noble Romans, and to commit various cruelties. His constitution was prematurely worn out by its natural weakness and, no doubt, habitual excesses. But by the time that Nero, now in his sixteenth year, was actually united to Octavia, and the plans of Agrippina had become ripe, the poor old man's existence might seem too long protracted. Claudius fell sick, indeed, but his sickness was not mortal. He quitted Rome, where he had been wont to keep constant residence for the prosecution of his laborious affairs, and betook himself to the more genial climate of the Campanian coast. But Agrippina resolved to hasten his end. The crime of poisoning was now rife in Rome. Caius had made a study of the science, and had doubtless encouraged and instructed other professors. One of these, the infamous Locusta, has obtained a name in the annals of crime, and is dignified by the grave irony of Tacitus with the title of an instrument of monarchy. The men accused her of having aided many wicked wives to rid themselves of their husbands; but the only case which history records against her is that of Claudius. It is said that the emperor was poisoned with a dish of mushrooms, a favourite delicacy of his supper-table. But perhaps it was an over-dose; he vomited,

and the drug failed of its effect. Agrippina hastily secured the services of the physician in attendance, who thrust a poisoned feather down the patient's throat under pretence of assisting him, and the effect was sufficiently rapid.

CHAPTER LVIII.

Retrospect of the government of Claudius—Nero accepted as Emperor by the pretorians and the citizens—Favourable promise of his reign under the ministry of Seneca and Burrhus—The 'Quinquennium Neronis'—Agrippina's domineering spirit—She threatens to supplant him with Britannicus, and drives him to contrive that prince's death—Schism between the mother and son—Nero falls into licentiousness and cruelty—Review of the general principles of polity embraced by the first Cæsars respectively.—(A.D. 54–59.)

THE principate of Claudius had been, on the whole, a period of general prosperity and contentment. The empire had been afflicted, indeed, by a widespread dearth which had been felt in the city as well as in many of the provinces. There had been disturbances, as we have seen, in the city, occasioned apparently by the turbulent spirit of the Jewish element in the population. On the other hand, the arms of Rome had been crowned with success in Britain and in Germany; the governors of the provinces had been kept under due control; the Senate had been treated by the emperor with studied respect, and but few of its members had suffered capitally for overt or manifest treason; the people had been well-fed and sedulously amused, the shows in the arena being made bloodier, and therefore more popular, than ever. Nevertheless it may well be believed that the emperor had gained no personal favour. His temperament was dull, his demeanour ungainly; the city rang with stories of his absence of mind, his folly, and his gluttony. His moral conduct was inoffensive, even innocent, as compared with that of his predecessors, and of the noble Romans generally; but his fatuity, as the sport of successive wives and favourites, brought upon him more contempt and odium than all the vices of the Cæsars before him. He suffered, however, more than all from the deliberate intention of his latest consort, Agrippina, to blast his reputation and to lower the estimation of his son Britannicus, in order to enhance the popular expectation of her own child, Domitius Nero. With the assistance of the philosopher Seneca, whom she be-

U.C. 807.

A.D. 54.

friended, and to whom she had given Nero as a pupil, she held up this upstart prince to the gaze of the citizens, and had already prepared the way for his succession to the empire before she allowed herself to expedite the event by the use of poison.

With the philosopher Seneca Agrippina had associated the prefect of the prætorians, Burrhus, in the care of her son's interests. Though admitted himself by adoption into the imperial family, the sacred stock of the Claudii and the Julii, and thus constituted in a legal sense the eldest scion and legitimate heir of the Cæsarian house, Nero might nevertheless apprehend that to the mass of the citizens Britannicus still appeared the true representative of the sire from whose loins he sprang. But the prætorians accepted eagerly the claimant whom their prefect presented to them. Any popular scruple that might have asserted itself was speedily repressed. It was felt, perhaps, by many that the real parentage of the child of the corrupt Messalina was doubtful at the best. Nero was at least the elder of the two, and in Nero the Romans were carefully taught to expect a genial ruler, a prince of talent and accomplishments, recommended by the actual beauty of his person, and by the cultivated graces of his demeanour. As far, indeed, as the tuition of an able teacher could go, the youth had been trained to discharge the functions of sovereignty both efficiently and popularly.

Nor did the commencement of the reign which was to follow, and which became at last the most justly detested of all the imperial series, belie the hopes and expectations of the people. The first five years of Nero's principate, the famous 'Quinquennium Neronis,' were long celebrated as an era of virtuous and able government. Under Seneca's guidance (for Seneca, assisted by the manly sense of Burrhus, was the ruling spirit of the time), Nero held the balance between the Senate and the people, and succeeded in gratifying both. His teachers did perhaps the best they could, both for him and for his subjects, in the general counsels of moderation and clemency which they showered upon him. 'Be courteous,' they said, 'and moderate; shun cruelty and rapine; abstain from blood; let youth indeed enjoy its pleasures, amuse yourself, but hurt no man.' And to these counsels the favourite of fortune, flattered on all sides, with every wish gratified, had for a time no difficulty in conforming himself.

But Nero's first and worst foes were those of his own household, and especially his own mother Agrippina. The confidant of this unscrupulous and ambitious woman had been her husband's freed-

man and minister Pallas. It was to weaken Agrippina's influence over her son, which was entirely evil, that the young emperor's advisers combined to effect the overthrow of this powerful instrument. Seneca, indeed, may have felt himself under some obligations to Pallas, and when a charge of treason was brought against him he offered to defend him; nevertheless he was disgraced and dismissed from court. Agrippina now ventured to use threats. She declared that Britannicus was arrived at manhood; she hinted that he was after all the true and natural heir of Claudius; and she allowed it to be understood that in the last resort she was ready to present him to the soldiers as their lawful emperor. From the day of her son's elevation she seemed resolved to play the ruler herself. She had been borne in the same litter with him, she had stamped the coins with her own head beside his. She received ambassadors, and sent despatches to foreign courts. In her infatuation she might really believe that the legions would transfer to her the duty they had been proud to owe to her father, their beloved Germanicus. The immediate effect of these arrogant proceedings was to excite Nero's jealousy against the stripling Britannicus. We may hope at least that he scrupled to impart his secret thoughts to Seneca or Burrhus; but other advisers were not wanting. A tribune of his guards named Pollio held conference with the infamous Locusta, and it was contrived, after one or more failures, that the innocent victim should

A.D. 55. swallow a deadly potion at a banquet in the palace, and in

A.U. 808. the presence of the guilty emperor himself. The crime was of course publicly denied, but it was not the less generally believed. The citizens, indeed, seem to have agreed to excuse it as a state necessity, and Seneca himself either excused or was silent upon it.

The schism between the mother and the son seemed now complete. Agrippina embraced the wretched orphan Octavia, whom Nero had married, but utterly neglected. She called her friends into counsel and collected money. She caressed the officers of the legions and the remnant of the ancient nobility. These intrigues were soon disclosed to Nero, who retaliated by removing the guard from his mother's residence, and marked his distrust of her by surrounding his own person with soldiers whenever he paid her a formal visit. Such pretended precautions may have given rise to the rumours which prevailed of the mother's plots against her son's life: while the chroniclers of the secret history of the times did not hesitate to affirm that Nero was already intent upon ridding himself of Agrippina, and was only restrained by the assurance of Burrhus

that she should be judicially sentenced if any such criminal intent could be proved against her. The empress was subjected to an inquiry which was conducted by Burrhus and Seneca. The accusers were perhaps unwilling to press the odious charge to a fatal issue, and the accused succeeded in rebutting it. For a moment she asserted her ancient power over her son, compelling him to bring to punishment some of her defeated assailants. Burrhus, indeed, and Seneca were exempted from this reverse of fortune. To their firmness and dexterity we must attribute the moderation with which the youthful emperor still, on the whole, conducted himself amidst the undeniable difficulties and perils of his position. But he was beginning to sink into licentiousness and dissipation; by the one what yet remained to him of natural good feeling was becoming rapidly extinguished; by the other he was already entangling himself in necessities which could not fail to drive him to tyrannical and bloody excesses. If he still ingratiated himself with the people by a great remission of taxation, he was about to indemnify himself by the proscription of the wealthiest of the nobles, and the confiscation of many vast estates.

But for the present Rome was tranquil; the citizens were content; the Senate pronounced Nero the best of its princes since Augustus. Julius Cæsar had deliberately overthrown the old forms which he felt to be obsolete, confident in his own power of reconstruction. Augustus had striven to revive the past. Tiberius was content with shaping the present. Caius had affected a foreign and Eastern despotism, but his feverish career was too short to make much impression. Claudius had attempted, in the narrow spirit of a pedant on the throne, to govern the Roman world as a master governs his household. Nero at last, or his advisers for him, seems to have disclaimed all general views, and contented himself with protecting the actual machinery of empire from disturbance. The tradition of the felicity of the first five auspicious years of his principate attests the consciousness of the Romans that they were ruled with a 'masterly inactivity.' Great honour is undoubtedly due to the men who actually governed for Nero that they did so little to abuse their temporary ascendancy. But there is less reason to extend our admiration to Nero himself, who up to this point was little more than a creature in their hands, and whose excesses, gross and wicked as they sometimes were, could only, as they deemed, be kept within tolerable limits by a certain measure even of criminal indulgence.

CHAPTER LIX.

Nero's amour with Poppæa—He murders Agrippina, divorces Octavia, marries Poppæa—Death of Burrhus—Proscription of the freedmen of Claudius—Nero casts off the restraint of Seneca's influence, and imitates the licentiousness of Greek manners—Performs in the theatre and drives in the circus—Great fire in Rome A.D. 64—Suspicion cast upon Nero—Averted by persecution of the Christians—Conspiracy of Piso: discovered and punished—Death of Seneca and of Lucan—Nero makes a progress in Greece, and exhibits himself in the musical contests—Death of Corbulo—Death of Thrasea—Nero's jealousy of the Stoic philosophers at Rome—Comparison between these philosophers and the Christians—Rebuilding of Rome—Nero's Golden House—Revolt of Galba in Spain—Dissensions among the legions in Gaul—Death of Vindex—Galba combines with Virginius—Nero's alarm and pusillanimity—The Senate declares against him—His flight and death.—(A.D. 59–68.)

THE Romans, at least in the next generation, fully believed that Britannicus had been poisoned, and allowed themselves to entertain little doubt that the crime was the crime of Nero himself. There may be some lack of proof both of the one charge and of the other; but a tragedy was now to be enacted, the guilt of which would seem to fall unmistakeably upon the head of the prince who has been branded for ever with the name of matricide. To the murder of Agrippina he was prompted more, it would seem, by the machinations of female jealousy than by the apprehensions for his own personal safety, which form so often the last excuse of tyrants. Poppæa Sabina, the wife of the dissolute Salvius Otho, was the fairest woman of her time, and at the same time one of the craftiest and one of the most licentious. She entangled Nero in an amour with her, and suffered him to send her husband to a distant government in Lusitania, while she employed all her arts to secure him for herself by the divorce of his wife Octavia. This obstacle removed, she might easily rid herself of Otho. But it seems that it was first of all necessary to overthrow the empress-mother. It was Agrippina's anger, Agrippina's influence and power, that she had to overcome. She had to contend with a mother who, if the scandal of the day was true, had not scrupled to ingratiate herself with her son by the foulest advances. But here, again, we must guard ourselves against the prurient chronicles of the day, and bear in mind the peculiar detestation in which Agrippina was held by the Romans more perhaps for the later crimes of her son himself than for her own, however flagrant they might really be. Poppæa revied against

her the charges which had been examined and rebutted four years before, and Nero under the teaching of Poppæa was now less unwilling to believe them.

The story of the murder of Agrippina, as related by Tacitus and confirmed in the main by others, is one of the most vivid episodes in our history. But it would mar the effect to attempt an abridgment of the historian's eloquent description. Suffice it to say that there seems no room for doubt that it was by the contrivance of Nero that she was shipwrecked in crossing the calm waters of the gulf of Bæizæ; that on her regaining the land and her own villa on the coast Nero appealed to his ministers, and fastened upon the counsel which he knew they would no longer withhold, to consummate their crime by the hand of assassins. It seems that Seneca and Burrhus felt that the long-expected crisis had arrived; that the palace must be relieved from the intrigues which had so long harassed it; and though they abstained from actually recommending the deed, they contrived that it should not less certainly be executed by another. It was easy to pretend that the servant of Agrippina who brought a message to Nero had let a dagger fall; this indication of her guilt was at once sufficient, and she was dispatched without delay. As she lay prostrate before her murderers, U.C. 812.
'Strike,' she cried, 'the womb which bore a monster!' A.D. 59.

Nero is reported to have himself inspected the corpse, and expressed his admiration at its beauty. Such were the horrors over which Roman society then shuddered and gloated.

With the death of Agrippina Poppæa obtained complete sway over the wretched tyrant. From this time the influence of his tutors seems to have passed away. His dissipations assumed coarser and more disgusting shapes, and with Petronius Arbiter and Tigellinus as the ministers of his pleasures he indulged in the most shameless vices in a way the most public and disgusting. The neglect with which he treated his consort Octavia was now the least of his iniquities. Poppæa lived with him openly as his mistress, her husband Otho consenting to her shame and his own. It was not for three years, however, that she cared to gain her paramour's divorce from his legitimate spouse and a release from her own connexion with her husband. Octavia was banished to an island, and after a year of exile the emperor found an excuse for putting her to U.C. 818.
death. Poppæa was now empress and reigned supreme; A.D. 65.
for Nero seems to have been infatuated with her to the last, though after bearing him one child, which died in infancy, she perished

prematurely from a kick he petulantly inflicted upon her during a second pregnancy. The Romans stigmatized the luxury of her bath of milk, for which she kept 500 asses in constant attendance, and of her mules shod with gold. The Jews spoke more blandly of her as a favourer of their nation, and one who helped to bring their rites into fashion at the capital. We may be satisfied with one rapid glance at her as a type of the worst class of Roman matrons, worthy to be the sport of the worst of men.

Burrhus, who has preserved the character of a blunt and for the times an honest man, was prematurely removed by death from the sight of his prince's increasing depravity. It was rumoured, indeed, that Nero had had him poisoned, but of this evidence at least is wanting. But the tyrant was now entering upon a career of blood, cutting off one by one many of the nobles who tempted him by their wealth, or caused him anxiety by their position and influence. The Romans more easily pardoned him when he sought to replenish his coffers by the proscription of the great freedmen of the court of Claudius, such as Doryphorus and Pallas. Seneca also, philosopher though he was, had amassed wealth by oppressive usury, and Nero listened eagerly to the charge of conspiracy which was easily forged against a falling minister. He succeeded, indeed, in clearing himself; but the risk he had run rendered him fully sensible of the perils of a courtier's life, and he sought to withdraw himself from the presence, or at least from the counsels, of his capricious master. Nero was willing to be relieved even from the last shadow of prudential restraint. The instruction which Seneca himself had given him in the precepts of Grecian philosophy had taught him to disregard the national traditions of the Roman nobility, and he found that he could easily make himself the idol of the vulgar, the scum of all nations with which Rome was now inundated, by renouncing the stately manners of his ancestors, and indulging in the ribald usages of Greeks and Orientals. He descended into the arena, and contended, or pretended to contend, with professional singers and musicians; he engaged in the contests of the circus, first on the private course in his own gardens, then in the public theatres of the Grecian colonies in Campania, and lastly in the Circus Maximus at Rome, before the eyes of 200,000 citizens. The nobles shuddered at the portent, for such this degradation seemed to them; but the rabble shouted with delight, and it was for the rabble that Nero was now content to reign.

It was in the midst of atrocities at which not only the prejudices

of men but the instincts of human nature might have revolted, that the capital of the Roman world was appointed to suffer one of the most signal calamities that has ever befallen society. In the summer of the year 817—the 64th of our era—a fire broke out in the eastern portion of the city, which, fanned U.C. 817.
A.D. 64. by a wind from the east, spread irresistibly, and swept away all the buildings which occupied the hollows below the Palatine. The conflagration lasted for six days, and it had hardly died away for lack of aliment, when another fire commenced in the opposite region beneath the Pincian, and, the wind having turned, devastated the region from thence to the Capitoline. Of the fourteen quarters of the city six, it is said, were completely destroyed; four were more or less damaged. It is probable that the hills escaped to a great extent, and the destruction was generally confined to the lower levels. The Romans deplored the loss of many of their most venerable temples and public edifices, and with them a vast number of works of arts and monuments of antiquity. The extent of their loss seems, however, as is usual in such cases, to have been considerably exaggerated, as certainly the most interesting structures on the Palatine, the Capitoline, and elsewhere survived the conflagration. The people, however, were seized with panic alarm. They believed that the two fires were the work of incendiaries; they declared that ruffians had been seen applying torches, and that, being seized and questioned, they had affirmed that they acted under orders. It was asserted that the emperor had watched the fire from a turret of his palace, and had amused himself with enacting the drama of the ‘Destruction of Troy’ in view of it; and the rumour spread that he had himself caused the conflagration and prepared the spectacle for his own wanton enjoyment.

The indignation of the suffering populace was deeply stirred by this rumour, and the throne of the Cæsar, based as it was upon the favour of the populace, seemed to tremble under him. Nero hastened to present himself on the spot, to traverse the smoking streets, and assist the people with all the money he had at hand. But it was still more important to amuse them, and advisers, it seems, were not lacking to suggest that nothing would amuse them more than the spectacle of cruel and sanguinary punishment inflicted upon any persons to whom they might be induced to transfer the odium which they were beginning to heap upon the emperor. The Jews had made themselves obnoxious to the people in many ways; the Jews were accused of being prone to sedition and tur-

bulence; the Jews were distracted among themselves by party differences, in which they were prone to invoke the interference of the Government. Among the Jews there had recently sprung up a sect, named after its founder, the Christian, which was making constant inroads upon the national faith of Judaism, and at the same time causing some alarm among the votaries of Paganism itself. It was effecting conversions even in high places, not among the freedmen of the great Roman families only, but among Romans themselves—men, and still more women, of the highest rank. The manners of the Christians, who withdrew themselves in a marked way from public and social life, caused much jealousy, and their tenets were commonly regarded as hostile to the laws and usages of the commonwealth. It is possible that some among them may have incautiously disseminated the notions of an impending millennium, to be preceded by the dissolution of the world and the coming of their Lord to judgment. It was easy to point to these ardent believers as the people who had sought to accelerate the promised advent by the destruction of the city and the empire, and it was, perhaps, by the malevolence of the Jews themselves that the suspicions of the Romans were thus directed against the Christians. Under the name of Christians Nero caused many victims to be seized. He condemned them to be burnt, wrapped in pitched cloth, in his own gardens, which he opened to the populace, for his own and their common gratification. Even the refuse of the Roman populace was at last moved to pity, and required the spectacle to cease. But Nero had gained his object; the first fury of his subjects had been assuaged, and it subsided into general distrust or careless contempt.

But whatever might be the cause of the discontent of the populace, it was the nobles of Rome who were most ordinarily mulcted to relieve it. There was no more direct or speedy way of replenishing the emperor's funds than the confiscation of the estates of the magnates of the empire. This class, despite of the jealousy with which the Cæsars had always regarded them, had still contrived to accumulate vast stores, and to gather into a few hands the great mass of the land in Italy and the provinces. The statement of a contemporary writer has often been repeated, that at this period one-half of the province of Africa was actually held in fee by no more than six proprietors. It was in this mine that Nero now worked assiduously, as far as his own fears allowed him; for the nobles, who saw their fellows proscribed and ruined under every

available pretext, began to tremble for themselves, to murmur, and to plot against him. An extensive conspiracy was formed in the year 64, embracing, no doubt, many of the chief people at Rome, at the head of which was placed a Calpurnius Piso, who ^{U.C. 817.} expected on the downfall of the reigning tyrant to be ^{A.D. 64.} raised by the senators into his place. The confederates might band themselves together under the watchword of Liberty; but the liberty they would proclaim would not be the liberty of the forum and the comitia, but the rule of the nobles and the Senate relieved from the control of a Cæsar or of any other popular autocrat. To this conspiracy Seneca seems to have given his concurrence; and it is from the views of Seneca's nephew Lucan, another of the faction, that we may best learn the views which animated it. Lucan assuredly would have been satisfied with a dictator such as Sulla, or a sole consul like Pompeius. But Piso possessed neither the vigour of a Sulla nor the popularity of a Pompeius. The combination, long loosely held together, was betrayed and easily broken in pieces; the partners in the adventure fell without striking a blow, and the punishment they suffered seems to have moved no compassion in the mass of the people, who still preferred the names of Marius and Cæsar, and even of Nero, the champions of the plebs, to any which the Senate deigned to invoke. Among the most illustrious of the sufferers were Seneca and Lucan, who were required to put themselves to death with their own hands.

It was not by the selfish passions of the senators that the empire of the Cæsars was to be overthrown. But Nero meanwhile was betrayed to his ruin by the too great security which their failure engendered. He seemed to feel himself wholly relieved from the necessity of consulting the prejudices of Roman society. He indulged more and more in the contemptible exhibition of his person and of his presumed accomplishments, which at last disgusted even slaves and foreigners. When he absented himself from Rome and made a tour in Greece he plunged still deeper, if possible, into this ignominious prostitution of the Roman character, and the people he left at home grew more and more incensed at the reports which reached them of his contending for the musical prizes of the Greeks at their national festivals. All classes were now thoroughly weary of him; when the news arrived that at last a distant army had revolted. There was still another power in the empire besides the Senate and the people at Rome. Up to this moment it had hardly been suspected. Tiberius, Caligula, and Claudius had allowed great

forces to be collected in the provinces and on the frontiers; they had been content to put the sword into the hands of provincial governors and legates, whom they could recall from their stations when they seemed to be getting too powerful, upon whom they had once or twice descended with the omnipotence of the imperial authority and hurled them indignantly from their posts. But it had hardly entered into their thoughts that one of these lieutenants should actually measure swords with his emperor, should defy him to arms, overthrow him without a blow, and drive him to self-destruction. Yet such was the catastrophe which was now impending.

Nor had Nero been without a warning. It is not impossible that his visit to Greece had been partly prompted by the jealousy he had begun to entertain of Domitius Corbulo, the commander of the legions in Syria, who had attained great distinction and favour with the soldiers through a long career of service. It would seem, however, that Corbulo was a loyal subject, or, to speak in accordance with Roman ideas, a loyal lieutenant to his emperor, and had allowed no dreams of irregular ambition to enter into his head. The sanctity of the military oath was still a powerful safeguard of the national institutions, more powerful, perhaps, under the early Cæsars than in the more turbulent period of the civil wars. Upon Corbulo at least the emperor might have securely depended, but he weakly feared the most trusty of his servants, and at last got rid of him by a command to throw himself on his own sword. Meanwhile he relied not less blindly on Galba, who commanded in the opposite quarter of the empire; but Galba was preparing to gird on his sword against him.

Nero returned to Rome from Greece in the year 68. He had amused the degenerate Greeks by the display of his accomplishments; he had flattered them by a specious declaration of their freedom; he had commenced at least a work that would have been of real utility to them, the cutting of the isthmus of Corinth. On the other hand, he had robbed them of many of their most precious ornaments, and had carried off, it is said, thousands of their statues to decorate his own capital, which he was intent upon rebuilding. He had further insulted them by the persecution he had instituted at Rome against the greatest masters of Greek philosophy, not Seneca only, but Barea and Thræsea and others. The Stoics were now the dominant sect in Rome; the Epicureans, the Academics, and the other schools which derived from Plato at Athens had fallen into disrepute. A certain earnestness

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and definiteness of purpose had begun to mark the age which had heard, and not without emotion, the early teaching of the Gospel. The temporal ruler had become jealous of opinions which threatened to withdraw men's minds from the admiration of his own greatness; and the same emperor who had been the first to strike at the Christians evinced no less apprehension of the philosophers of the Porch, who were not a herd of vulgar votaries, but a select band of distinguished and ardent men of science. From neither the one nor the other had he, indeed, any real cause of fear; but he found it easier to repress the philosophers than the Christians. Thræsea and his high-minded friends submitted to his behests without a murmur, and, excepting a few burning sparks of indignant eloquence, left no memorial of their sufferings behind them. The Christians, at least equally submissive, bequeathed to their descendants a memory of their wrongs which could never die, but, voiceless as it was, took deep root in their bosoms, and resulted at last in the greatest of all social and moral revolutions.

But Nero, still scarcely conscious of the real perils with which he was environed, returned to witness the restoration of Rome from the ruins of the great conflagration, expanded and beautified in the style of Greece rather than of Italy; and still more to rejoice in the completion of the enormous palace which he had caused to be constructed—the Golden House, as it was vaingloriously denominated—decorated with the utmost profusion, and extending, with many long galleries, over a large portion of the old area of the city. It embraced, we must suppose, a succession of mansions on the principal heights, the Palatine, the Esquiline, and the Cælian, connected by bridges or corridors, and included in its vast inclosures gardens, lakes, baths, and pleasure-grounds. The Romans maliciously hinted that the emperor had purposely destroyed the ancient city to make way for the palace he destined to erect upon it; for himself he said, when he took possession of the gorgeous residence, that now at last he was lodged as a man should be. Such sayings were treasured up against him.

At the commencement of the year 68 the aspect of public affairs had already become serious. Plots for the subversion of the government were believed to be rife in the armies of the West. The officers who held command in Gaul and Spain had become objects of suspicion. At the same time the upper classes of the city were gloomy and discontented; the temper of the populace, which had thus far been the firmest stay of Nero's

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tyranny, was uncertain. It was at the repeated instances of Helius, the freedman whom he had left as governor at Rome, that the emperor was at last persuaded to return from Greece; but he had been put in excellent spirits by the response of the Oracle of Delphi. The God had warned him to beware of the seventy-third year, a warning which seemed to the youth of thirty to promise ample length of days. It was proved in the sequel to have another and a fatal signification. He entered Naples, Antium, and Rome in a succession of triumphs. But hardly had he reached the city and looked vain-gloriously around him when the rumour met him of the impending revolt. In the winter of the year Galba, the governor of the Hither Spain, had been in communication with Vindex, in the Farther Gaul, with a view to a simultaneous rising. Galba, too, had had his favourable omens. As a child he had been introduced to the aged Augustus, who, it seems, had carelessly let fall the words, 'You too shall some day taste of empire.' Galba, it was remarked, was now in *his seventy-third* year. But the promise was forgotten, the coincidence overlooked. It was upon Vindex that Nero first fixed his attention, and required the legions of Germania to attack him. The commander of this force was well inclined to side with him, but his soldiers carried out their orders, and cut the battalions of Vindex in pieces, upon which Vindex threw himself on his own sword. The victors, however, soon changed their minds, and, renouncing their obedience to the emperor at Rome, invited their own leader to assume the purple. From this decisive step Virginius shrank, but he did not hesitate to attach himself to the side of Galba, who was now preparing to march upon Rome at the head of the united forces of the two great provinces of the West.

But a period of some months elapsed before the legions of Spain and Gaul could be moved from their distant quarters into the heart of Italy. This period of suspense, and the uncertainty attending it, allowed the wretched emperor to show all the weakness of his character, and his utter inability to contend with the adverse fortune which had at last overtaken him. He passed with rapid alternations to either extremity of hopefulness and despair. The hasty preparations he made for defence were absurd and trifling, while he continued more and more to provoke the citizens by his levity. When at last the defection of Virginius and the combination of the two armies became assured he displayed the most abject cowardice, tearing his robes and his hair, and giving vent to pusillanimous ejaculations. Meanwhile the senators and knights in the city

became excited with the hopes of speedy deliverance. Nero was no longer safe in his capital. The people began to clamour against him; for there was a dearth of provisions, owing, as was fiercely declared, to the emperor's selfish inadvertence. The prætorians, the last resource of the Roman princes, were seduced from his side by their prefect Nymphidius—so easily was the power of the emperor shaken to pieces in his own capital. Abandoned by all, nothing was left him but suicide, and even the casket in which he had provided poison with the aid of Locusta was stolen from him. Not a guard or a gladiator was at hand to pierce his breast. 'I have neither friend left me nor foe!' he exclaimed, petulantly; then, taking horse with one or two attendants, he fled by night from the city, and ensconced himself at daybreak in the villa of his freedman Phaon, four miles beyond the walls, in an unfrequented spot between the Nomentane and Salarian roads. Here he lingered for a few hours in utter prostration of spirit, sustained by a crust of bread and a drink of fetid water, when news arrived from Rome that the Senate had met on hearing of his departure, proclaimed him a public enemy, and decreed his death 'in the ancient fashion.' Asking what this phrase purported, he was told that the culprit was stripped, his neck inserted in a forked stick, and his body smitten with rods till death. Terrified at this announcement, he took two daggers from his bosom, tried their edge, but again laid them down, alleging that the moment was not yet arrived. Again and again he tried to nerve himself to the last effort; but it was not till the sound of horses' hoofs was heard, and the messengers of death were plainly closing upon him, that he placed a weapon to his breast and bade his slave Epaphroditus drive it home. Another moment and it would have been too late. The centurion and his soldiers burst into the room just in time to receive his dying exclamations. The corpse was imperfectly consumed on the spot; the remains were left to the attendants, by some of whom they were eventually laid in the Domitian gardens on the Pincian. It is recorded as a striking circumstance that even such a monster as Nero found some unknown hands to strew flowers upon his urn.

Nero perished on June 9, 68 (U.C. 821), at the age of thirty years and six months, in the fourteenth year of his principate. The child borne him by Poppæa had died in infancy, and a subsequent marriage with Statilia had proved unfruitful. The stock of Julii, refreshed in vain by grafts from the Octavii, the Claudii, and the Domitii, had been reduced to a single branch, and with Nero the

adoptive race of the great dictator was extinguished. The first of the Cæsars had married four times, the second thrice, the third twice, the fourth thrice also, the fifth six times, and the sixth thrice. Of these repeated unions a large number had borne offspring; yet no descendants of any survived. A few had lived to old age, many had reached maturity, some were cut off by early sickness, the end of others was premature and mysterious; but of the whole number a large proportion were undoubted victims of political jealousy. Such was the price paid by the usurper's family for their splendid inheritance; but the people accepted it in exchange for internal troubles and promiscuous bloodshed; and though many of the higher classes of citizens had become the victims of Cæsarian tyranny, yet order and prosperity had reigned generally throughout the empire; the world had enjoyed a breathing-time of a hundred years before the next outbreak of civil discord which is now to be related. 'The secret of the empire,' namely, that a prince could be created elsewhere than at Rome, was now fatally discovered, and from this time the succession of the Roman princes was most commonly effected by the distant legions, and seldom without violence and slaughter.

CHAPTER LX.

Galba arrives at Rome and is accepted as emperor—He chooses Piso for his associate—The soldiers discontented at his parsimony—Otho aspires to overthrow him—The prætorians offer to support him—Fall of Galba—Otho becomes emperor—Character of the Roman captains as exemplified in Galba—The legions on the Rhine nominate Vitellius emperor—His officers Valens and Cæcina lead their forces into Italy—Battle of Bedriacum and fall of Otho—Vitellius advances and enters Rome—Gluttony and indolence attributed to him—The legions of Syria nominate Vespasian—He is supported by the prefect Mucianus—His son Titus carries on operations against the rebellious Jews—Antonius Primus leads Vespasian's forces into Italy, and offers terms to Vitellius, which he at first accepts, then attacks the adherents of Vespasian in the Capitol—Burning of the Capitoline temple—Primus forces his way into Rome—Fall of Vitellius.—(A.D. 68-70.)

SERVIUS SULPICIOUS GALBA had been proclaimed imperator by the legions in Spain on April 13, almost two months before the actual fall of Nero. He was still engaged in making his preparations for joining the troops of Gaul, when the news of the emperor's condemnation and speedy death reached him. He advanced, and encountered at Narbo the envoys who were charged to convey to him the

sanction of the consuls and the Senate to his claim. The chiefs of the capital, though they allowed the people to assume the cap of liberty and make some parade of recovered freedom, did not pretend to restore the republic; they were urged, indeed, to throw the government into the hands of the most vigorous of their generals by the intrigues of Nymphidius, who was himself a candidate for the empire. But the claims of this upstart were ridiculed by the prætorians themselves, and he soon fell a victim to his audacity. Other competitors, indeed, were rising in various quarters, but none of them could make head against the fortunes of Galba, who could venture to assume the title of Cæsar, and proclaim himself the accepted successor of the great Julius. He made some examples of the few rash opponents he encountered on his march, and entered Rome as a victorious general on January 1 in the following year.

Galba was a man of ancient family, and had served with merit through a long military career. He was strict in discipline, beyond the temper either of the soldiers or of the citizens, and he possessed no graces of manner to persuade or force of genius to command. Nor was he unaware that the same power which had raised him to pre-eminence might arm rivals in other camps; and though some such movements in the nearer provinces had been easily put down, he could not but feel insecure of the obedience of the great pro-consuls on the Rhine and the Euphrates. A few days after his arrival at Rome a mutiny of the soldiers in Upper Germania was announced. They demanded another emperor in the place of Galba, but professed to leave the choice to the Senate and people. Galba had, perhaps, anticipated such a demand. He had already contemplated the appointment of an associate, and now, with the aid of some of the chief citizens, he went through the form of an election. The choice fell upon Piso Licinianus, a noble of distinction, whose only fault, perhaps, was that he was too nearly of the same austere stamp as Galba himself, and might intensify rather than relieve his growing unpopularity. But whatever were the actual merits of the nomination, Galba spoilt its effect by the parsimony he exhibited to the soldiers, who expected a liberal donative on the occasion, and were grievously disappointed.

There was no man at Rome whose personal views were so directly thwarted by Piso's elevation as Otho; none felt himself so much aggrieved, and none was so bold and unscrupulous in seeking redress. This noble, whom Nero had removed to Lusitania when

he took from him his wife Poppæa, had attached himself to Galba's enterprise, and had re-entered Rome with him. No doubt he meant to become the old man's successor, but his schemes were thus suddenly intercepted. An elegant debauchee in the capital he had also acquired the art of ingratiating himself with the soldiers in his camp, and now, when his hopes had been excited to the utmost by the soothsayers with whom he had associated, he set about corrupting the troops whom Galba had just led from Spain, with the firmest reliance on their fidelity. These he found, indeed, already discontented with their emperor, and shrinking from the prospect of being marched for his cause to the German frontier. The prætorians were still more disgusted at the exchange they had made, and as early as January 14, the fifth day after Piso's election, they were prepared to carry Otho to their camp at nightfall, and present him to the people as the choice of the soldiers in the morning.

But Otho acted with more deliberation. On the morning of the 15th Galba was sacrificing before the temple of Apollo, on the Palatine, when the aruspex informed him that the signs were inauspicious and portended a foe to his household. Otho was standing by. He heard the words and accepted them as an omen. Presently a freedman announced that his architect awaited him at home. The signal was preconcerted; it implied that the soldiers were ready. He quitted the emperor's side, leaning on the freedman's arm with the air of a careless lounge; he descended through the house of Tiberius into the Velabrum, then turned to the right to the Golden Milestone, beneath the Capitol, in the Roman forum. His footsteps can all be tracked, and present some indications of Roman topography. Here he was met by a handful of common soldiers, who hailed him as emperor, thrust him into a litter, and with drawn swords bore him off across the forum and the Suburra. The gates of the prætorian camp were opened to them, and the revolt was at once complete.

Galba had not yet finished his sacrifice when the report arrived that a senator, his name as yet unknown, had been thus hurried to the camp. Hasty measures were taken to ascertain the fidelity of the cohort on guard, of some battalions which had reached Nero from Illyricum, and were quartered in the Campus, of the Germanic companies in the city, and other detachments which the tyrant had called recently to his aid. Among all these appeared the same indifference and indisposition to arm either for the emperor or

against him. The new pretender, it was soon announced, was Otho, but this man had been well-nigh forgotten in the city during his long absence, and the populace seemed disposed to await the result without a movement. Galba had his colleague at his side, but both of them seem to have been swayed by the conflicting counsels of their chief advisers, Vinius and Laco. Galba turned irresolutely from one to the other, uncertain whether to confront the mutiny in person. At last he sent Piso before him. Speedily a report was spread that Otho had been slain by the prætorians. Knights, senators, and people crowded around the emperor, murmuring at the disappointment of their revenge, and calling upon him to issue forth and extinguish the revolt with his presence. One of the guards waved a bloody sword, exclaiming that it was he who had killed Otho. 'Comrade,' said the old man, 'who commanded you?' The words were treasured up as worthy of a Roman emperor, but they struck no chord of loyalty among the soldiers or the people. It may be doubted whether the movement just described was not a concerted treachery. By the time that Galba had overtaken Piso in the forum he was met by the tumultuous bands of the prætorians advancing, with Otho in their midst. A single cohort surrounded Galba, but on the meeting of the two forces its standard-bearer tore the emperor's image from his spear-head and dashed it to the ground. The whole band at once decided for Otho; the knights and senators had disappeared, the populace took to flight; the bearers of the emperor's litter overturned it at the Curtian pool beneath the Capitol. A few words which he uttered were diversely reported. Some said that they were abject and unbecoming; others affirmed that he presented his neck to the assassins' swords, and bade them strike, 'if it were for the good of the republic;' but none listened, none, perhaps, heeded the words actually spoken. Galba's throat was pierced; and his breast being protected by his cuirass, his legs and arms were hacked with repeated gashes. The murder of Galba was followed by that of Vinius, and lastly of Piso, who alone made for a moment a brave defence, and forced his way into the temple of Vesta, which could offer no secure asylum in that day of unnatural revolution. The prætorians were fully sensible of the importance they had assumed in the state, and demanded to choose their own prefects. The principate was transformed into a military empire, the empire into a military republic.

The sudden fall of this unfortunate ruler must have caused great disappointment to all the more sober citizens. Such among them as

were superior to the popular illusion in favour of a prince of the Julian race, to which a kind of divine right seemed already to attach, might well have imagined that one of the most able and experienced of their military chiefs would have held sway over the people and the legions with a firm and equal hand. The men who now governed the provinces, nobles by birth, senators in rank, judges and administrators as well as captains by office, represent the highest and largest training of the Roman character, for they combined a wide experience of men and affairs with the feelings of a highborn aristocracy and the education of polished gentlemen. Long removed from daily intercourse with their more frivolous peers in the city, they escaped for the most part contamination with the worst elements of society at home; they retained some of the purity together with the vigour of the heroes of the republic. They were conquerors, but they were also organisers. They impressed on the minds of the Orientals a fear, on that of the Occidentals an admiration of Rome, which taught them first to acquiesce in their subjection, and afterwards to glory in it. These were the true promoters of the Roman civilisation which has left its impress upon Europe for so many centuries. The citizens, for their part, could not easily believe that this type of the national character had failed to command success in the government of the empire. They were assured that it was by personal mismanagement that Galba had fallen. After summing up his qualities, his desire for fame, his dignified reserve in awaiting rather than seeking it, his private frugality, his public parsimony, the moderation of his passions, the mediocrity of his genius, his freedom from vices rather than possession of virtues, Tacitus, speaking solemnly in the name of his countrymen, declares that all men would have pronounced him fit to rule had he but never ruled. Undoubtedly he should have condescended to bribe the soldiers at the outset; this would have given him a breathing-time, and afforded the only chance of controlling them. His successors took care not to fall again into the same error. Some failed notwithstanding, but others succeeded in consequence.

It was not, indeed, in Rome only that Galba, in his dealings with the soldiery, had committed a fatal error. Even at the moment of his arrival in the city and assumption of the principate the legions he had left behind in the remoter parts of Gaul were rising in mutiny against him. The armies on the Rhine, under the command of Cæcina, Valens, and Vitellius, had refused the military oath to Galba at the opening of the year, and pronounced the ancient

formula of devotion to the Senate and people. But this was rather from want of a leader than from love of the republic. Vitellius was soon encouraged to put himself forward as a senator and a noble as well as an officer of high standing. The other chiefs of the army acquiesced in his superior claims; the legionaries were easily persuaded to salute him as their emperor, and it was resolved at once to march upon Rome. The advance of this formidable force was only delayed by the necessity of providing for its wants as it moved. The states and cities of Gaul from the Rhine to the Alps were put under requisition, and any resistance of the natives was overcome with ruthless violence.

Vitellius was greeted with the news of Galba's death while still in the northern parts of Gaul. His coadjutors, Valens and Cæcina, who consented to act as his lieutenants, moved on before him. They were bolder and better captains, and more fit to encounter the shock of collision with the forces of the new ruler; and it was necessary, perhaps, for Vitellius to check his own progress till he was assured of the adhesion of the Narbonensis and Aquitania to his cause. Meanwhile the Senate had taken the oath of fidelity to the claimant who was already on the spot. The prætorians, satisfied with the appointment by themselves of their own prefect, guaranteed his security in the city, and all the troops that were at hand transferred their service to him without a murmur. The populace were gratified by the execution of Tigellinus, a detested favourite of Nero; the commanders in Africa, Dalmatia, and Mæsia gave in their adhesion. Otho was not prepared for the defection of Vitellius; but on hearing of it he offered to satisfy all his claims, and even to share the empire with him. The character of Vitellius has been universally described as that of a mere sensualist, without energy or foresight; yet we must remark that Galba selected him for an important command, that two of the ablest of the Roman chiefs consented to serve under his eagles, and that Otho, on the throne at Rome, and supported by half the forces of the empire, was content to offer him the most splendid conditions. And these, too, Vitellius had the spirit to refuse.

Perhaps Otho was himself temporizing. As soon as it became evident that the empire must be decided by the sword he quitted Rome at the head of all the forces he could muster. The civil wars had commenced again, and the citizens were filled with anxious forebodings, while they felt themselves powerless to restrain the leaders of the legions on either side. Otho hastened to encounter

the forces of Cæcina, which had penetrated the Pennine Alps and were marching across the Cisalpine. Otho was well supported by his generals, Suetonius Paulinus and others; Cæcina was kept in check, and suffered considerable losses. But when Valens, coming from the Western Alps, effected a junction with him he assumed an attitude of defiance, and challenged Otho to a decisive battle at Bedriacum, near the confluence of the Adda and the Po. After a resolute and bloody contest the victory remained with the Vitellians, whereupon the Othonians promptly admitted them to their camp, and made common cause with them. Otho had still a band of faithful followers about his person, and in the rapid alternations of civil warfare his position might not be desperate. But, personally indifferent to existence rather than moved by compunction at the effusion of blood, he determined to refrain from further resistance, and, hopeless as he was of preserving his life from his enemies, to make the sacrifice of it with his own hand. There was more grace and courage in his last act than friends or foes had before credited him with.

Vitellius had been collecting his troops, or advancing slowly in the rear of his lieutenants, when he received the news of the victory of Bedriacum and the death of his adversary. At the same moment his enterprise was confirmed by the accession of the troops in Mauretania, and by the overthrow of Albinus, a rival candidate, who made an attempt on Spain. Such was his security that he descended the current of the Saone in a barge to avoid the fatigue of marching. At Lugdunum he met Valens and Cæcina returned victorious from the Cisalpine, and thereupon he assumed the ensigns of empire. Some cruel executions followed. The Illyrian legions were mortified at the slaughter of several of their officers; but the victims of the conquerors were taken generally from the lower ranks. He allowed the chiefs to retain for the most part their offices and honours. The Romans, indeed, gave him little credit for generosity, and insisted that his clemency was merely the indifference of a gross debauchee who cared for nothing but his gluttonous gratifications. As he marched slowly along all the country round was swept for delicacies for his table. If he did not confiscate his enemies' estates for his own behoof he suffered his followers to plunder or appropriate them. But his edicts at least were moderate and popular. He waived for the present the title of Augustus, and positively refused that of Cæsar. He ordered the diviners, the favourites of Otho and of Nero, to be

expelled from Italy; and forbade the Roman knights to disgrace their order by combating in the arena. It was acknowledged that his wife Galeria, and his mother Sextilia, conducted themselves in their high position with noble simplicity. Vitellius, in his advance into Italy, associated himself with Virginius, the most generous Roman of his day, who had openly espoused his cause. Nevertheless the march was marked by many horrors and excesses. The bonds of discipline were generally unloosed, and the soldiers were constantly quarrelling and fighting among themselves. Some of them demanded the murder of Virginius, and it required great firmness to refuse their violent demands. But the Romans still refused to forgive the victor in a battle over Romans. They declared that when he reached Bedriacum he showed no remorse at the death of so many of his countrymen, nor horror at the sight of their remains, but even expressed his brutal gratification. 'The corpse of an enemy,' he said, 'smells always well, particularly of a citizen.' At last he would have entered the city, cloaked and booted, in the garb of war, at the head of his conquering troops, but from this atrocity he was dissuaded, and at the Milvian bridge he laid down his military ensigns, and traversed the streets in the civil *prætecta*, the soldiers following, but with sheathed swords.

The contest between the rival pretenders had been waged thus far by the soldiers of the West only. But nearly one-half of the whole military force of the empire was stationed in the East, and had as yet taken no part in it. The Syrian legions were removed to a vast distance; they were fully occupied with the duty of watching the Parthians, of controlling the Egyptians, and of suppressing the revolt long imminent, and which in the last year of Nero's reign had actually broken out, in Palestine. Moreover, they were under the command of discreet and able leaders, who would not commit themselves prematurely to quarrels with which they had no sympathy. Mucianus was proconsul of Syria, and first in command; but his lieutenant, T. Flavius Vespasianus, if inferior in birth and position, was not less accomplished as a soldier, or less honoured by the legions. Vespasian, together with his son Titus, was actively employed in Palestine. Both he and Mucianus had nominally acquiesced in the claims of Galba, of Otho, of Vitellius in succession; but they had made no active movement in support of any one of them. The rapidity with which one after another had disappeared from the scene might convince them that none had any firm foundation for his power. Mucianus was by nature sluggish,

and devoid of personal ambition; but the plebeian Vespasian was inspired with a fanatical belief in his own good fortune, and under the influence of Oriental diviners, and of their glowing presage of a political saviour, became filled with the idea that he was destined for empire. Mucianus was not unwilling to concede to him the first place and lend him all his own influence; the Syrian legionaries, glad of the prospect of returning to Rome, received him with enthusiasm. On the 1st of July the U.C., 822.
A.D. 69. soldiers proclaimed him imperator, to which the titles of Cæsar and Augustus were speedily added. Mucianus undertook to lead one division of the whole force into Italy; Vespasian remained for a time in Syria to maintain the frontiers, and concert measures of alliance with the foreign states beyond them; to Titus was entrusted the conduct of the war in Palestine.

Mucianus moved slowly under the usual pressure, from the want of means and preparations made in advance. He was obliged to levy contributions on the cities through which he passed, declaring that 'money is the sinews of civil war,' but he preserved discipline among his followers, and his progress was not marked by the excesses which so often alienated the provinces from the armies of the republic. He was joined by three Illyrian legions, which had been recently summoned to Italy by Nero, and now devoted themselves to the chief in whom they recognised the avenger of Otho, the friend of Nero. The seeds of further defection were sown by letters to the troops in Spain and Gaul, and particularly to the Fourteenth legion, which had been marched all the way from Britain, had fought for Otho, and was now sent back by Vitellius as not to be trusted by him. To be dismissed to distant quarters in a barbarous island was a penalty and an affront.

At the moment that the Syrian legions were proclaiming Vespasian, Vitellius was making his entry as emperor into Rome. The account we receive of his conduct there continues inconsistent as before. His behaviour in the Senate, the forum, and the theatre is described as modest and becoming. He was assiduous in attending the discussions of the Fathers, and suffered himself to be opposed and contradicted in debate, even when obliged to demand the protection of the tribunes. But this outward moderation was set down to weak compliance. He left the affairs of state to be actually managed by Valens and Cæcina with the grossest oppression and extortion, while he surrendered himself wholly to the grossest debauchery. Within the few months of his power he

spent nine hundred millions of sesterces (seven millions of pounds sterling) in vulgar and brutal sensuality. Meanwhile the prætorians were disbanded, the police of the city was neglected. The legionaries chose their own quarters at will, inflicting the greatest hardship upon the citizens, till they were found to suffer from intemperance. A portion of them were drafted into the prætorian camp; the rest complained of this preference, and demanded fresh indulgences. The reign of freedmen recommenced. Asiaticus and Polycletus recalled the memory of Pallas and Narcissus, of Felix and Helius and others who had disgraced the principate of Claudius and Nero. The degradation of Rome was complete; and never yet perhaps had she sunk so low in luxury and licentiousness as in the few months which followed the death of Otho.

Three legions of Vespasian had crossed the Italian Alps under Antonius Primus, who led the van of the whole army of Mucianus. Vitellius, harassed by the revolt of more than one of his divisions, had sent forward both Valens and Cæcina, with all the troops they could muster, to meet him. But Valens lingered behind under the plea of illness; Cæcina covertly meditated defection. Their forces were indeed formidable in numbers, but Primus might rely upon the influences he could employ against them when the armies encountered in the lower districts of the Cisalpine. He boldly challenged them to the combat, refusing to halt even at the instance of his own chief, and his confidence was rewarded by a hard-won victory on the plain of Bedriacum. Cremona fell into his hands, a place of great strength, in which, no doubt, the treasures of the harassed neighbourhood had been deposited, and, whether by mistake or of set purpose, it was given over to plunder and burning, as in the worst days of Marius and Sulla.

Vitellius was still at Rome grovelling in his beastly indulgences, refusing to credit the account of his disasters, but wreaking his fears and jealousies upon the best of the nobles within his reach. The Flavian generals sent him back their prisoners, that he might learn the truth from their mouths. Vitellius saw, interrogated, and straightway slaughtered them. A brave centurion extorted his leave to visit the scene of warfare and ascertain the state of affairs; but spurned on his return by his infuriated chief, he threw himself indignantly on his sword. This self-deception could not long continue. Vitellius at last quitted the city at the head of the prætorians, but he was assailed by fresh disasters on all sides. Primus crossed the Apennines to encounter him, while the populations of

Central Italy, the Marsians, Pelignians; and Samnites, rose against him; and the Campanians were hardly held in check by the bands of gladiators at Capua. The two armies confronted one another in the valley of the Nar. Valens, who had been captured, was now slain, and the sight of his head so terrified the Vitellians that they yielded without a blow. Primus deigned to offer terms to Vitellius, which were confirmed by Mucianus. It is difficult to account for this indulgence, which the defenceless emperor greedily accepted, preferring to retire quietly into private life. But he too easily yielded to the instances of some of his adherents in the city, who regarded with horror the approach of the legions which had sacked Cremona. He made his escape back to Rome, and allowed himself to be put at the head of a desperate faction who drove the favourers of Vespasian, under his brother Sabinus, into the Capitol. The Vitellians could do no more than watch the outlets during the day; at night Sabinus found means of communicating with the Flavian guards beyond the walls. Next day the Vitellians made a disorderly attack upon the place of refuge, which retained the name of a fortress, but was without any regular means of defence. They mounted the ascent from the forum and reached the gate on the Clivus. The Flavians strove to repel them by flinging stones from the roof above. The Vitellians, in their turn, threw burning missiles into the colonnades and houses above them, and thus drove the defenders from point to point, but still could not effect an entrance. Climbing to the tops of the houses they flung blazing torches into the Sacred Temple itself, and the august sanctuary of the Roman people was consumed in the raging conflagration.

The assault, the defence, the conflagration were watched by Vitellius from the palace opposite, by the people from the Forum and Velabrum beneath, as well as from the summit of every hill. The citizens were keenly reminded of the sack of Rome by the Gauls, for the soldiers of Vitellius came from Gaul, and were mostly of Gaulish extraction. But the Gauls under Brennus had burnt the city only; it was reserved for these later barbarians to destroy the temple of the Roman divinities. The fugitives within the precincts were dismayed. Sabinus lost all presence of mind, and made no further attempt at defence. The Gauls and Germans burst in with yells of triumph, and put to the sword all that could not escape. Domitian, the younger son of Vespasian, who had taken refuge in the holy precincts, contrived to slip away in disguise. Sabinus was seized, and Vitellius dared not

protect him. Lucius, brother of Vitellius, who commanded some troops for him in the neighbourhood, might now have marched boldly to Rome and taken possession of it. But he lost the critical moment, while Primus was advancing slowly but surely, in constant communication with Mucianus, who was also moving to his support. The Flavian legions as they approached the walls advanced in three divisions, and attacked three gates of the city. The Vitellians went forth to meet them at all points, soldiers and rabble mingled together, without plan or order. At one point they held the assailants at bay; but in the centre and on the right the Flavians carried everything before them, and drove their opponents from the Campus Martius into the city. The victors entered pell-mell with the vanquished, for the gates of Rome now stood, it seems, always open; and the combat was renewed from street to street, the populace looking gaily on, applauding or hooting as in the theatre, and helping to drag the fugitives from the shops and taverns for slaughter. The rabble of the city threw themselves into the defenceless houses, and snatched their plunder even from the hands of the soldiers. Rome had witnessed the conflicts of armed men in the streets under Sulla and Cinna, but never before such a hideous mixture of levity and ferocity.

Through all these horrors the Flavians forced their way, and drove the Vitellians to their last stronghold, the camp of the prætorians. The lines of this enclosure, formed by a solid wall, were strenuously attacked and desperately defended. The assailants had brought with them the engines requisite for a siege, and now set themselves to their task with determination. They cleared the battlements with catapults, raised mounds to the level of the ramparts, or applied torches to the gates. Then bursting into the camp they put every man still surviving to the sword. Vitellius, on the taking of the city, had escaped from the palace to a private dwelling on the Aventine; but under some restless impulse he returned and roamed through his deserted halls, dismayed at the solitude and silence, yet shrinking from every sound and the presence of a human being. At last he was discovered, half-hidden behind a curtain, and ignominiously dragged forth. With his hands bound, his dress torn, he was hurried along, amidst the scoffs of the multitude, and exposed to the assaults of the passing soldiery. Wounded and bleeding, he was urged on at the point of the lance; his head was kept erect by a sword held beneath to compel him to show himself, and to witness the demolition of his statues. At last, after

every form of insult, he was dispatched with many wounds at the Gemoniæ, to which he had been thus brutally dragged. The death of Vitellius, on the 21st December, finally cleared the field for Vespasian, to whom, though still far distant, the senators hastened to decree all the honours and prerogatives of empire. Primus and Mucianus adhered faithfully to him, and paid their court to his son Domitian, as his acknowledged representative. The most high-minded of the senators, Helvidius Priscus, a noted disciple of the A.D. 70. Stoics, proposed that the national temple should be rebuilt A.U. 823. by the nation, but that Vespasian should be invited, as the first of the citizens, to take a prominent part in the restoration. Vespasian and Titus were appointed consuls at the commencement of the new year, and to a civil strife of eighteen months soon succeeded a stable pacification.

CHAPTER LXI.

Continuation of the conquest of Britain—The Druids destroyed by Suetonius Paulinus—Revolt and victories of Boadicea—Her death, and subjugation of the Southern Britons—The Romans advance Northward—Mutiny of the Gaulish auxiliaries in the camps on the Rhine under Claudius Civilis—Mucianus and Domitian visit Gaul—The mutiny suppressed—Story of Sabinus and Eponina—The movement not national—Account of the relations of Rome with Palestine—Judæa finally annexed to the province of Syria—Caligula threatens to place his statue in the Temple of Jerusalem—Claudius humours the scruples of the people—Cruelty and oppression of the procurators under Nero—General rebellion of the Jews—The Jewish war—Vespasian and Titus—Siege and fall of Jerusalem.

THE pacification of Italy and the city was not extended throughout the frontiers except by the complete subjugation of three important provinces. Rome was not thoroughly mistress of her vast empire until she had completed the conquest of the Britons, enforced submission of her own mutinous auxiliaries in Gaul, and broken the spirit of the restless people of Judæa. Our history has been for the most part confined to the city from which it takes its title; but for these critical episodes, however distant their scene, a short digression must be permitted.

1. After the defeat of Caractacus, the southern part of the island of Britain, from the Stour to the Exe and Severn or Wye, formed a compact and organised province, excepting only the dependent kingdom of the Regni, in Sussex. Beyond the Stour the territory

of the Iceni constituted another extraneous dependency. The government of the province was administered from Camulodunum (Colchester), in which a military colony had been established. Londinium, though neither colonised nor fortified, had already become a place of commercial resort, and a great trade was rapidly springing up between this island and the Continent. Londinium supplied Britain with the manufactures of Belgium and the Rhenish cities, and exported corn and cattle and handsome slaves. Roads earlier than of Roman construction penetrated the country from Richborough and Dover to Seaton and Brancaster, to the Severn, the Dee, and the Northern Ouse, and it was through Londinium that they all took their course. The centre of the island was gradually yielding to the encroachments of the Roman arms and civilisation. Four legions were now planted in Britain; the Second, which, under the command of Vespasian, had recently subdued the south-west, was quartered at Caerleon, on the Usk; the Ninth kept guard over the Iceni at Brancaster; the Twentieth, at Chester, watched the Brigantes, who maintained their independence in the North; the Fourteenth was occupied in carrying on the conquest of the Ordovices, in North Wales. The Gaulish priesthood, proscribed in their own country, would naturally seek refuge in Britain, and retreated step by step before the advancing foreigners to the sacred recesses of the isle of Mona, where their countrymen stood at bay.

The successors of Ostorius had made no great exertions for the subjugation of the West till Suetonius Paulinus assumed the command. Under this leader the Fourteenth legion reached Segontium (Caernarvon), on the Menai. He prepared rafts or boats A.D. 61. for his infantry, while his Batavian cavalry ventured to A.U. 814. swim their horses across the rapid stream. The opposite shore was lined by multitudes of warriors, besides the priests and women who animated their defence. But the vigour of the Roman soldiers proved irresistible. The rout of the Britons was complete, the massacre terrible. The groves of the Druids were cut down or burnt, and their mysterious worship was now, it seems, finally abolished.

But Suetonius was suddenly recalled by a defection in his rear. The Iceni had ventured to assert their independence. Their queen Boadicea complained of bitter injuries and insults to herself and her daughters, and roused the nation to arms. A great swarm of warriors poured down upon the Roman province, crossed the Stour before the Ninth legion could overtake them, and threw themselves upon

the Roman colonists in Camulodunum, who in their careless security had neglected to fortify it. They could only throng into the great temple of Claudius which they had erected in their city, and make shift to defend themselves there till succours could arrive. But the troops on which they depended suffered a repulse, the temple itself was speedily forced, and the fugitives put to the sword. From thence the Iceni spread themselves over the country westward, and soon destroyed the flourishing Roman town of Verulamium. Suetonius, who had marched swiftly back, found himself unable to defend the unfortified city of Londinium, and this important place he was obliged to leave to be stormed and plundered. His object was to secure himself in some port from which he might communicate with the Continent, and it seems uncertain whether he betook himself towards the South coast, or sought to reoccupy Camulodunum, which was of easy and direct access from Belgium and the Rhine. Whichever route he took, the Iceni followed him, flushed with success and confident of victory, but demoralised by their easy victories, and burdened with their accumulated plunder. Ten thousand resolute men drew their swords for the Roman empire in Britain. The natives, many times their number, spread far and wide over the plains; but they could assail the narrow front of the Romans with only a few battalions at once, and the waggons which conveyed their booty and bore their wives and children thronged the rear and cut off almost the possibility of retreat. The courage and eloquence of Boadicea urged them to the attack, but Suetonius was cool and confident in the well-tried discipline of the Romans. The first onset of the Britons was steadily repelled; the Romans stepped forward in their turn, and to the resolute charge of the Roman legion no effectual resistance could be made. The Britons, hemmed in by their own baggage, were cut to pieces. It was reported that

A.D. 61. 80,000 of them perished, while the Romans acknowledged
A.U. 814. a loss of 400 only. Boadicea put an end to her life by
poison, and the revolt of the Iceni was subdued as suddenly as it
had arisen.

The monuments of the Roman civilisation in the South of Britain were perhaps almost swept away. The charred remains of the Londinium of the first century are discovered even now beneath the many buildings that have risen over them in succeeding ages. It is said that 70,000 Roman colonists had perished. But these losses were speedily repaired. The yoke of Rome was now securely fixed, and we hear of no further attempt to reject it. The South of

Britain became a tranquil province, and prospered in arts and civilisation. The plains were covered with innumerable flocks and herds, and its mineral treasures were discovered and worked at an immense profit. The progress of conquest in the North was almost equally uninterrupted. A few words shall be given in another place to its progress, marked as it is by some memorable traces remaining to this day; but we may consider the frontier of the empire to have extended to the Mersey and the Trent before the death of Nero. During the civil wars which have just been related one legion had been drafted from the permanent garrison of the island, but its temporary absence seems to have caused little embarrassment. Undoubtedly the Britons acquiesced more readily than many other nations in their conquest by the Romans. They fought bravely for their freedom, but when that was once lost they were not slow to accept the advantages which were brought to them by submission to a higher social order.

2. We may turn now to the singular occurrence of a widespread defection among the foreign auxiliaries of the Roman armies in another province. Galba had drawn largely upon the legions stationed in Gaul under Vindex and Virginius; Vitellius had despatched before him, and himself had led, no small portion of the garrisons which held the Gaulish population in submission, or checked the encroachments of the Germans. The civil wars had immensely weakened the power of the empire on the Rhine when the opportunity was seized by a Gaulish officer, named Claudius Civilis, to excite a mutiny among the Gaulish battalions which served by the side of the Roman legions in that country. The legions themselves were, we may presume, composed not generally of Italians but of the race of Roman colonists in Gaul, and were themselves mostly of Gaulish extraction. Nevertheless these soldiers were taught to regard themselves as Romans, and to accept the services of the native auxiliaries as of an inferior race. Custom, indeed, had reconciled the two classes one to another, and we do not meet, perhaps, in any other quarter with the existence of any diversity of feeling between the legionaries and their allies. It was the genius of Civilis, himself a Romanised Gaul, enrolled in the Claudian gens along with many of the chiefs of his nation, that in the first place engaged the Batavi, of whom he was himself one, to desert the ranks of the legions and assert their own independent choice of an emperor. While Hordeonius Flaccus retained the legions of the two Germanias in obedience to Vitellius, Civilis induced the Bata-

vian battalions to declare for Vespasian, to seize the island between the Rhine and Wahal, which was their native district, and call upon the Gaulish auxiliaries throughout the Rhenish camps to join them. The adherence, however, of the mutineers to Vespasian was a mere pretence. As they seemed to grow in strength their views expanded. They proclaimed the liberty of Gaul, renounced their submission to Rome, and for a moment put forth Civilis himself as the chief of an independent empire. The steadiness with which the legions, weakened and distracted as they were, and ill-commanded by a general of slender vigour or capacity, contended against this sudden mutiny, is well deserving of notice. For a time the rebel force made progress. Civilis repulsed the first attack that was made upon him, and shut up the defeated Romans in the strong station of *Castra Vetera*, or *Xanten*. But the Gauls seem to have been unprovided with means for a regular siege. Their attempted blockade was broken and the place relieved. Again they mustered in force and gained further successes; but the Romans persisted in their defence with all their accustomed obstinacy. After the overthrow of *Vitellius* the chiefs of Vespasian's party gathered large forces for the final reduction of the enemies of the commonwealth. Fortunately the population remained unmoved. The defection, formidable as it became, was confined to the soldiery, nor did it extend beyond the battalions on the Rhenish frontier. The movement, firmly confronted, could not fail to exhaust itself. *Mucianus* and *Domitian* himself left Rome to take the command against Civilis; but by the time these leaders had reached *Lugdunum* the Gaulish hero had been driven out of his island, and had betaken himself to the German side of the river. *Classicus* and *Tutor*, two of the native chiefs, perished in the course of the contest, but Civilis, who survived, seems to have made terms for himself, and on the suppression of the mutiny was allowed to live unmolested. *Julius Sabinus*, another of his accomplices, who claimed descent from the first *Cæsar*, could hope for no such mercy. He concealed himself, attended only by his wife *Eponina*, and lived in woods and caves for nine years. When at the end of that period he ventured at last to issue forth and surrender himself to Vespasian's clemency, both he and his heroic consort were cruelly condemned to death. Such, at least, is the romantic story, embellished by some interesting details, which obtained credit among the Roman writers, but there seems much reason to doubt its entire authenticity. It was but the surface or fringe of the great Gaulish province which had been ruffled by this

abortive agitation. The whole of that vast dependency subsided henceforth into profound and lasting tranquillity. The story of this military mutiny shows plainly that the national spirit had become extinct among the Gaulish people. It was not from their own forests or fastnesses that the last heroes of resistance to the conqueror had sprung. Civilis and Tutor, Classicus and Sabinus, were all officers attached to the Roman armies; they had learnt the art of war under Roman training; their views were directed to self-aggrandisement only. The two great elements of Gaulish nationality, the nobility and the priesthood, had been absorbed and assimilated by the empire. The nobles were content to become centurions and tribunes; the Druids rejoiced in the titles and the pensions of augurs and flamens. We shall hear no more either of one or of the other.

3. There remains, however, a pendant to the histories just recounted in the picture of the fall of Jewish independence, which occurred at the same moment, and is both more interesting and more deservedly famous than either.

The government of the country of Palestine had undergone many changes since it was first conquered by the Romans under Pompeius. Julius Cæsar had cultivated the favour of the inhabitants, and M. Antonius had conferred the sovereignty of Judæa upon Herodes. Augustus confirmed the independence of the Jews under this prince, whom they cherished as a native ruler. At his death, B.C. 4, his ample dominions were divided among his four children, of whom Archelaus occupied Jerusalem and Judæa. But this prince falling into disfavour with the emperor, his kingdom was taken from him and annexed as a dependency to the Roman province of Syria. Herod Agrippa, grandson of 'the Great' Herod, was allowed by the favour of Caligula, and afterwards of Claudius, to reunite the whole of his grandfather's possessions under his own sceptre; but on his death, A.D. 44, the territory was again divided, some portions being given to his brother, and afterwards to his son Agrippa, who held his government in Chalcis, on the borders of Ituræa. Judæa was resumed by the empire. Cæsarea, on the coast of the Mediterranean, was constituted the residence of the procurator of Judæa, who was content for the most part to avoid all collision with the prejudices of the Jews at the national capital of Jerusalem. The Jews were at this period in a critical state of political effervescence. One leader had risen after another who under the title of Christ had engaged their religious sympathies, and excited their hopes by an appeal to prophecies and

traditions which pointed to an impending revolution, and the re-establishment of the kingdom of David. Caligula had wantonly trampled on the national prejudices, and had required the priests to place a statue of himself in the great Temple at Jerusalem. Urgent petitions against this act of desecration had been addressed to him, but without effect, and it was only by the politic delay of the procurator and the timely death of the emperor himself that a general and desperate outbreak was averted. Claudius was not indisposed to humour these religious scruples, and the oppressions and cruelties exercised by his officers were probably unauthorised by him; but doubtless it was most difficult for any governors on the spot to maintain the peace among a population ever excitable, and ever disposed—not at Jerusalem only, but at Rome and Alexandria, and wherever they were gathered together in considerable numbers—to quarrel among themselves and with all the foreigners around them. At last, under the harsher government of Nero, the spirit of disaffection came to a head. The Jews broke out, not without deep provocation, into a general rebellion. The procurators exercised great severities, and these were avenged by great losses. It had become necessary to make a strong effort once for all, and extinguish for ever, at whatever cost, the national aspirations of an unfortunate people. The spirit of the Jews was, indeed, very different from that of the Gauls or the Britons: the influence of their priests was far more powerful than that of the Druids. Their religion, their polity, and their national character were all far more instinct with life. They contended for a distinct national object; and though there were still various shades of opinion among them, though some classes leaned to Rome and counselled submission, the feeling was more general and more persistent than had ever elsewhere animated resistance to the conquerors.

If the resources of the Jewish people were unequal to the task of resisting the concentrated energies of Rome, they were far more formidable than might have been expected from the smallness of their territory, and their slender experience of war. In extent Palestine hardly equalled one of the least of European states, such as the modern Belgium or Portugal; nor was its soil naturally calculated to support a very dense population. It seems, however, that, partly from artificial cultivation, partly from foreign importations, it actually maintained far more than proportionate numbers. Galilee alone, a district not larger than an English county, could boast of numerous cities. The Jews had been exempted generally from the

levies imposed on the provinces: the flower of their youth had not been drained to recruit the cohorts on the distant frontiers. But their rulers had been required to maintain contingents within their own territories, and there were many bands of trained soldiers prepared to join the insurrection. To these were added numerous troops of brigands ready to swell the ranks of a national movement. A sworn band of avowed assassins under the name of Sicarii, or men of the dagger, kept both the priests and the nobles in constant terror for their lives, and urged them to desperate measures. But on the whole the enthusiasm of the Jewish people was sincere and genuine. The names of Maccabæus, of David, and of Joshua were invoked among them in no faltering accents.

The Sanhedrim, or national Senate, cast the procurator and the king Agrippa equally aside, and assumed the conduct of this national revolt. They divided the country into seven military governments. The command in Galilee, the outpost of Palestine against Syria, was confided to Josephus, the same who has recorded the history of the Jewish war, and who represents himself therein as a zealous as well as an able commander. At a later period, indeed, in writing an account of his own life, he seems to study to ingratiate himself with the conquerors by declaring that he was all along devoted secretly to the cause of the Romans, and it is as a traitor to Judæa that he has been generally regarded by his countrymen. His defence of Galilee, however able it may have been, was graced by few successes. Vespasian was the captain to whom the conduct of the war was entrusted by Nero. We are told, indeed, that Josephus held Iotapata for forty-seven days, and Vespasian was himself wounded in the final assault. Josephus relates a marvellous story of the way in which his own life was preserved in the slaughter which followed; but captured by the Romans he became from this time a flatterer, a follower, and probably an instrument of the Roman commander.

The tactics of Vespasian were slow and cautious. The reduction of Iotapata, in Galilee, was followed by the surrender of Tiberias and the storm of Tarichea, when the Jews were made fully sensible of the remorseless cruelty with which they would be treated. The campaign of the year following was conducted on the same principle. Vespasian refrained from a direct attack upon Jerusalem, but reduced and ravaged all the country round. During the heat of the struggle for the succession in Rome these operations were relaxed, and Vespasian withdrew to Cæsarea to await the result of

revolution at home. Titus, his son, was sent to Antioch, to confer with Mucianus on the measures it might be expedient to take, and the fit moment for striking for the empire. His interests were diligently served by Tiberius Alexander, who commanded in Egypt; by Agrippa, king of Chalcis; and in the year 69, as we have seen, he was saluted emperor by his troops. From that time he ceased himself to direct the affairs of Palestine, which he committed to Titus. The traditions of Roman discipline would not permit him, even at such a crisis, to desist from the paramount duty of securing the ascendancy of the republic over her rebellious province. Titus watched through this period of suspense with his sword drawn, but he took no active measures until the fate of Vitellius was assured. U.C. 823.
A.D. 70. In the year 70 he moved with all the forces he could command against Jerusalem itself. He united four legions in this service, together with twenty cohorts of auxiliaries and the troops maintained by various dependent sovereigns. The whole armament may have amounted to 80,000 men. To these the Jews opposed, from behind their defences, 24,000 trained soldiers, and these too were supported by a multitude of irregular combatants. The defences of Jerusalem, both natural and artificial, were remarkably strong; but the defenders must have been fatally impeded by the crowd of worshippers, computed at some hundreds of thousands, who had collected within the walls for the celebration of the Passover, and were now unable to escape from them.

But it was by the dissensions of the Jewish factions themselves, more than by any natural obstructions, that the defence was most impeded, and finally frustrated. The reduction of Galilee and Samaria had driven crowds of reckless swordsmen into the city. The supremacy hitherto held with difficulty by the moderate party was violently wrested from them. The Zealots under their leader Eleazar filled the streets with tumult and disorder, seized the persons of the chiefs of the nobility and priesthood, and urged the mob to massacre them. When the better sort of people, under Ananus the high-priest, rallied in self-defence, their opponents, more prompt and audacious, seized the Temple and established themselves in its strong enclosure. The Zealots invited assistance from beyond the walls; Ananus and his friends were speedily overpowered, and the extreme party, pledged against all compromise with Rome, reigned in Jerusalem. Jehovah, they proclaimed, had manifestly declared Himself on their side. The furious fanaticism of the Jewish race, at least within the walls of their sacred city, was

excited to the uttermost; but while it had many secret opponents within it met with no assistance from the great Jewish communities at Alexandria, Ctesiphon, or Seleucia. The armies of Titus closed around the devoted city: the 'abomination of desolation' stood in 'the holy place.'

But the Zealots themselves, at the moment of victory, were split into three factions. Eleazar, at the head of the residents in Jerusalem, held his strong position in the inner inclosure of the Temple; John of Giscala, who led a less violent party, was lodged in the outer precincts; Simon Bargiora entered the city with a third army, and set himself to the defence of the ramparts. Eleazar was got rid of by assassination, and the whole of the Temple fortress fell to John; but between him and Simon there still reigned mutual jealousy and defiance, which were hardly smothered in the front of the common enemy.

Titus advanced from the north and planted his camp on the ridge of Scopus. He first encountered an outer wall which crowned the eminences around the city. The Jews made a spirited defence, and inflicted great loss on their assailants. But the Romans, proceeding methodically with the means and implements of regular warfare, succeeded in making a breach in these ramparts, and effected a lodgment within them. They blockaded the narrower enclosure which was now before them, but they did not cease from constant attacks upon the second wall, and especially on the citadel Antonia. In the first instance Titus had attempted conciliation, and sent Josephus to the gates with the offer of honourable terms. The enthusiasts in the city had driven away his envoy with arrows. He now repeated his offers, but with no better success. Then at last he determined to proceed to extremities. Famine began to prevail among the Jews. The soldiers required to be served first, and the wretched citizens suffered the direst horrors. Children were eaten by their parents. The terrors of the people were excited by the report of prodigies. The fanatic Hanan traversed the streets repeating the cry of 'Woe to Jerusalem,' till at last, exclaiming 'Woe to me also,' he fell by a blow from a Roman catapult. The Romans affirmed that the gates of the Temple had burst open of their own accord, and a voice more than human had been heard exclaiming, 'Let us depart hence.'

The fortress Antonia was destroyed, and the Temple close at hand lay exposed to the engines of the assailants. The struggle still continued desperately, and the Romans suffered many reverses.

At last the Temple was no longer tenable. John and Simon, united together in their last danger, withdrew into the upper city on Zion, breaking down the causeway which connected it with the Temple on Moriah. The Temple itself was stormed and entered over the bodies of a vast multitude of helpless defenders. Titus would have saved the Holy of Holies from the general destruction, but a soldier wantonly fired the inner doors, and the whole of the sacred edifice was soon involved in a common conflagration. Behind the walls of the upper city the last remnant of the nation stood hopelessly at bay. Once more Titus sent Josephus to parley with them; again the renegade was dismissed with imprecations. Then he came forward himself to the chasm of the broken bridge and conferred, but still in vain, with the leaders of the people. He had shown more clemency than perhaps any Roman chief before him; but his patience was now exhausted, and he vowed to effect the entire destruction of the city. The work of demolition was carried out to the end. Of the multitudes who had crowded on Zion vast numbers were slain in unavailing sallies; famine did the work of death upon many more. The remnant were captured and sold, with many thousands of their countrymen, into slavery. John and Simon concealed themselves in the subterranean galleries of the rock on which Jerusalem is founded. They attempted to work themselves a passage into the country beyond the walls. Their supplies fell short, they were compelled to issue forth, and were caught and recognised. John was granted his life in perpetual imprisonment. Simon was reserved to be an ornament of the emperor's triumph. The Jews still maintained themselves for a moment in the fortresses of Machærus and Massada. But the final result was no longer doubtful, nor was the presence of Titus himself any further required for completing the subjugation of the country. He hastened to Rome, and threw himself into the arms of his father, whose jealousy might have been excited by the title of Emperor which the soldiers had fastened upon him. But Vespasian was a man of sense and feeling, and the confidence between the father and son was never shaken. The destruction of Jerusalem, the subjugation of Palestine, redounded to the glory and to the aggrandisement equally of both.

U.C. 823.

A.D. 70.

CHAPTER LXII.

The Flavian Gens of plebeian origin accepted in the place of the Julian—Character and policy of Vespasian—Restoration of the Capitol, demolition of Nero's palace; building of the Colosseum, Arch of Titus, and Temple of Peace—Fiscal necessities and parsimony of the emperor—His endowment of the teachers of learning—Quintilian the grammarian made consul—Vespasian's policy in regard to the philosophers—Process of Helvidius Priscus—Succession of Titus—His character—Calamities in his reign: a great fire in Rome; the eruption of Vesuvius and destruction of Herculaneum and Pompeii.—(A.D. 70–81.)

THE accession of Vespasian, the head of the Flavian house, to power marks an important epoch in Roman history. The Empire had been gained, indeed, by Cæsar, as the strongest in arms, and by strength in arms it had been really maintained by his successors; but in him and his descendants the Roman people had recognised the noblest of their own blood, the same blood which had been illustrated, from time immemorial, by consuls and imperators and other leaders of men, and to which additional glory had accrued, first from the undoubted genius of its greatest chief, and again from the halo of divinity which popular favour had cast around him. The family of Julius had reigned by divine right; such had been the theory tacitly admitted by the mass of the Roman people. The nobles, indeed, had denied and disparaged such a claim, and had often striven against it; the mutual jealousy of the Cæsars and the Senate had been the cause of mutual anger and bloodshed; nevertheless the theory had in the main prevailed, and become a substantial bulwark of the imperial autocracy. Even after the death of Nero and the extinction of this legitimate line of rulers, the supreme power had been grasped, even for a moment, only by men of the highest family distinction. A Sulpicius, a Salvius, or a Vitellius, if he had been successful in his own person, might have easily transferred to his own family the idolatry with which the Romans had regarded the Julian. But the Flavii were men of another class. The Gens had been plebeian; but plebeians more than once had placed themselves on an equality with patrician houses. The early history of Rome had been a constant struggle between the two castes, in which the lower had been eventually successful. Some of the plebeian houses were essentially noble, but such was not the

case with the Flavian. Vespasian himself was a man of low class; neither himself nor his ancestors had become ennobled by the attainment of civic honours. He had risen to military rank by the strength of his own arm, sustained by prudence and ability, and he had been raised to the highest place by the support of the soldiers, by whom he was now thrust upon an amazed and possibly a reluctant Senate. But the people readily accepted the irregular nomination of the army, and the accident which had identified his fortunes with those of the great temple on the Capitoline, and made the Flavii its defenders when assailed by impious adversaries, gave at once that colour of sanctity to his enterprise, and perhaps of divinity to his person, which he wanted to fill in popular imagination the place of the sacred family which had just vanished from the scene. The flatterers of the Flavian dynasty were not unequal to the occasion. They soon contrived to link its genealogy to an heroic companion of Hercules, and prepared the way for the deification of Vespasian after his death, and the ascription of divine honours to his son Domitian even during his lifetime. It was their 'heavenly genius,' said the poets, that 'elevated them to the stars.'

The Flavian princes were prompted by a natural policy to conciliate the nobles and the Senate. But, further, the reign of Vespasian was the restoration of harmony and mutual confidence between the remnant of the old Roman race and the multitude of baseborn citizens, the descendants of soldiers, provincials, and freedmen who now so greatly outnumbered it. The Romans themselves remarked the rise of a new era in social manners at this period. The simpler habits of the plebeians and the provincials prevailed over the reckless luxury and dissipation in which the highest class, the grandchildren of the conquerors of Greece and Asia, had so long indulged. Vespasian himself, simple in his habits, as became the scion of a simple race, set the example, and the nobles on their part, impoverished as they now mostly were, were not slow to follow him. The first Flavian emperor, mature in years, and long accustomed to military obedience, continued to control his passions and caprices after the attainment of unlimited power. While accepting a legal exemption from all the restraints of the laws, he continued to maintain the character of a strictly constitutional sovereign.

The conquest of Britain, the pacification of the legions on the Rhine, and the thorough reduction of the long-standing discontent of Palestine, placed Rome at the summit of her material power. The reign of Vespasian is undoubtedly the apogee of her military renown.

At the same time Vespasian was enabled to give what she might deem a guarantee for her future fortunes in the restoration of the Capitoline temple, the sacred pledge of her eternal dominion. The same writer who has described in all its details the sack of the Capitol has related the ceremonial with which its rebuilding was inaugurated; yet, strange to say, the site of this historic edifice has not to this day been actually ascertained, and the two summits of the Capitoline or Tarpeian hill may still contend for the honour. This act of pious restoration threw especial splendour upon the principate of the fortunate ruler. Nor was he less fortunate in the opportunity which he seized to gratify the people by the demolition of Nero's Golden House, the monument of the tyrant's selfish pride, associated no doubt in their minds with the fatal conflagration of the city. On one large portion of the site he constructed magnificent public baths, to which Titus gave his name. On another he erected the amphitheatre, still in great part existing, which is commonly known by the name of the Colosseum, probably from the colossal image of Nero which stood before its entrance. The victories of Titus were at the same time commemorated on the triumphal arch which bears his name and records the conquest of Judæa. But this work was undertaken late, or executed slowly, for it was not completed and dedicated till the accession of Domitian. To these celebrated buildings may be added a new forum and a Temple of Peace, which added to the convenience as well as the splendour of the great capital. But Vespasian was made aware of the decline of population which was now becoming apparent in Italy. The numerous colonies he reconstituted attest his anxiety to stay the plague which amidst all the outward show of prosperity was secretly eating into the vitals of the empire.

The reign of Vespasian, extending over a period of ten years, was an era of general tranquillity. The chiefs of the legions yielded to his superior claims to pre-eminence. Mucianus loyally supported him, and Antonius Primus, less content to acknowledge his own inferiority, was reduced to insignificance. It was the great care of the prudent and frugal emperor to restore the finances of the state, which had been thrown into confusion by the recklessness of Nero, and the lavish expenditure of the civil wars. It was necessary to invigorate the discipline of the legions, to discharge the unruly adherents of Otho and Vitellius, and to compel even the soldiers of the victorious faction to rest content with moderate rewards. The censorship which Vespasian assumed associating his son Titus in

its responsibilities, gave occasion to reconstitute the provinces and free states, which were dealt with according to their political deserts, or sacrificed to the convenience of the treasury. The gift of the Latin rights to the whole of Spain was a tribute to the memory of Galba. This favour to the Western provinces was balanced by severity towards other regions. Achaia, to which Nero had precipitately granted freedom, was again reduced, on pretence of insurrection, to the condition of a taxable province. Lycia, Rhodes, Byzantium, and Samos were deprived of their autonomy. The dependent sovereignties which had subsisted up to this time in Thrace, Cilicia, and Commagene were finally absorbed into the empire. The charges of parsimony or avarice which have been made against Vespasian may be extenuated by the necessities of his exhausted treasury. It was, no doubt, with reference to the manifold expenses with which he found himself beset that Vespasian declared that to maintain the state of public affairs he required a capital sum of four myriad millions of sesterces, or 320,000,000*l*.

The restoration of the Capitol, the erection of the Colosseum, and other vast constructions, were objects of national policy which demanded enormous expenditure; but Vespasian was generous also, as well as wise in the sums he laid out, the first of all the Roman princes, in the encouragement of a liberal education. Augustus, indeed, had founded a library for the use of the citizens in the Palatine temple of Apollo; but Vespasian not only founded another library in his forum, but instituted a class of salaried teachers. From this time learning became at Rome, as at Alexandria under the Ptolemies, a learned profession. Vespasian himself had no taste for literature or appreciation of literary merit; but he seems to have been alive to the importance of attaching to the interests of the empire the increasing class of literary men, especially those who as teachers directed the ideas of the rising generation. Quintilian was perhaps the first of the rhetoricians who obtained the consulship, but the connexion between the chair of the grammarian and of the senator was becoming lasting and frequent. An alliance was henceforth maintained between the teachers of learning and morals and the guardians of the public peace. Not that it came at once into full operation. The philosophers of the period were for the most part discontented with the government, and frequently intriguers against it. They resented the brutality of the prætorians, of the legionaries, and of the imperators whom they sustained in power. Their contempt was almost as galling to the ruler as their resistance. Nero

had persecuted them, and silenced by death or proscription the most distinguished among them. Mild and moderate as he naturally was, Vespasian was compelled to employ harsh measures against them; but his memory must always suffer for the death of Helvidius Priscus, the great luminary of the Stoic school, whom he first condemned to banishment, and afterwards suffered to be executed. But public opinion no doubt fully supported him when he resolved to sweep from the city the whole sect of the Stoics as well as of the Cynics. He revived the obsolete enactments of the republic which had prosecuted the philosophers for the corrupt tendencies then ascribed to their teaching. All professors of the obnoxious dogmas were required to leave Rome. A special grace was accorded to Musonius, who was excepted by name from the common proscription. Whatever might be this sage's political theories he knew that the free state was impossible, and refrained from flattering the illusions of a frivolous fanaticism.

On the whole, we must pronounce the reign of Vespasian a model of prudent conduct and honest purpose. At the age of seventy, full of toils and honours, this fine specimen of the Sabine manners was called to his rest by natural decay. During his last illness he refused to relax from public business, and at the crisis of his disorder demanded to be raised upright, exclaiming U.C. 832. that an emperor ought 'to die standing.' With admi- A.D. 79. rable prudence he had admitted Titus to a share of the imperial power when the legions of the East had audaciously saluted him by the title of emperor. Titus had relieved his father from many cares and responsibilities. In the conduct of the censorship he had taken upon himself the principal share of the odium which necessarily attached to it. He had borne the brunt of some intrigues and even personal attacks, and he had faced the necessity of adopting some harsh and perhaps cruel precautions. Titus came to the undivided sovereignty not without a character, at least among the nobles, for craft and cruelty; but he was still the darling of the soldiers, and a favourite with the people. There was in him a certain feminine softness which ingratiated him with those who came ordinarily in contact with him, and he bore the reputation of a scholar and a refined thinker no less than of a great military leader. He is the hero of one of the very few love-romances of Roman history, having become enamoured of Berenice, a Jewish princess, sister of Agrippa, king of Chalcis, whom he induced to follow him to Rome, intending to take her formally to wife. But relaxed as were the morals of the Romans,

their national prejudices on the point of intermarriage with foreigners were unequivocally strong. The same public feeling which required Cæsar to discard Cleopatra, and branded Antonius with the guilt of treason for his connexion with her, demanded of Titus the sacrifice of his Jewish favourite, and they parted one from the other both, it is said, equally reluctant.

Titus did not associate with himself his brother Domitian, whose jealousy he had reason to fear. When, only two years later, he found himself on his deathbed from premature decline, he is said to have muttered that he had but one thing to reproach himself with, and that, it was surmised, was his weakness in naming this unworthy brother as his successor. Throughout his short career he had been specially careful to respect the position of the Senate, and the nobles regarded him as a model sovereign. When he was reported to have said that no suitor to the emperor ought to be allowed to leave his presence unrequited, and to have complained that 'he had lost a day' when he had let twenty-four hours pass without the performance of some beneficent action, it was to the nobles especially that these gracious sentiments pointed, and by them, no doubt, that they were remembered and circulated. Meanwhile the treasures which his father's care had accumulated enabled him to carry on the government without measures of extortion or proscription; but he had himself indulged in too liberal profusion, and had his life been protracted even Titus, the 'delight,' as he was fondly termed, 'of the human race,' would surely have run the downward course of so many gallant young princes before him.

This short principate witnessed two grave calamities. The great fire of Rome under Nero was repeated to an extent hardly less disastrous, and this time the flames, breaking forth to the north of the Campus Martius, and running in a broad belt across
U.C. 833.
A.D. 80. the level space to the foot of the Capitoline, swept over a region full of important buildings which had escaped the earlier conflagration. On this occasion the fire climbed the Capitoline itself, and the restored Temple of Jupiter suffered, though certainly it was not destroyed by it. But this catastrophe is not so renowned in history as the destruction of the cities of Pompeii and Herculænum by an eruption of Vesuvius. The volcanic character of this mountain seems not to have been known to the Romans before this fatal event. The cities which nestled at its foot were numerous and densely peopled, and their inhabitants grew and multiplied in undoubting security. The first indication of danger had been given by

an earthquake a few years earlier, by which some public edifices in Pompeii seem to have suffered ; nor, as it appears, had they been wholly restored when the two cities were destroyed, Herculaneum by a flood of burning lava, Pompeii by a shower of ashes. Both became deeply engulfed. Some attempts seem to have been made to search at least for lost treasures, if not to clear and rebuild the habitations ; but any such attempts were speedily abandoned, the ruin was pronounced irretrievable, the site was abandoned, and in the course of ages actually forgotten. It was not till the middle of the last century that this tomb of an ancient civilisation was accidentally discovered. From that time to the present explorations have been made and gradually extended. At first very few skeletons appeared, and it was supposed that the people had profited by some timely warning to escape ; but more abundant remains have since come to light, and it is probable that multitudes may still be found huddled together in some yet undetected place of public resort.

U.C. 832.
A.D. 79.

CHAPTER LXIII.

Accession of Domitian—His feeble and inconsistent character—His attempts to acquire military renown—His campaign on the Ister unsuccessful—Defeat and death of Fuscus in Dacia—Victories of Agricola in Britain—He is recalled to Rome, and dies some years later—Domitian's shows and festivals—Revolt of Saturninus on the Rhine suppressed—Domitian's precautions and cruelties—In his administration of the empire he returns to ancient principles—Attempted reformation of morals—Condemnation of the Vestal Cornelia—Persecution of the actor Paris—Persecution of the Christians—Case of Flavius Clemens—Domitian assassinated by the freedmen of his palace.—(A.D. 81-96.)

TITUS had left no male descendant, and it was impossible, according to the canons of Roman law, for his daughter Julia to assume the chiefship of his house. Domitian, the deceased prince's brother, was the apparent heir to his estate, and therewith presumptive heir, according to the notions of the time, to the political functions with which he had been invested. Such was the light in which Titus had regarded him ; but so far had the prejudices of Roman birth been weakened in the mind of the man who had sought a Jewish princess in marriage, that he had himself proposed to Domitian to form a union with his daughter, and thus consolidate the natural and the

legal claims to the succession. But in matters of law and religious tradition Domitian was a purist. He utterly refused to violate the national principles by an illegitimate marriage; but whether from passion or, as seems more likely, from policy, he did not scruple to attach the young princess to himself by an irregular and, as was then as well as now regarded, an incestuous connexion. This incident furnishes a key to the character of the new Cæsar, as profligate in morals as he was selfish in his policy. Domitian, indeed, reflects in a peculiar manner the moral character of the age. The degeneracy of the sons of Vespasian paints the decline of the Roman people. In the father we recognise a type of the armed citizen of the republic, a genuine representative of that middle class which still retained the stamp of rustic simplicity, so long associated in the imagination of the Italians with the farmers of the hills and the artisans of the towns of Sabellia. But this native simplicity had seldom been proof against the seductions of city-life. Bred in the atmosphere of a court, the sons of the Sabine yeoman quickly cast aside the restraints of their early childhood. The deterioration was more marked in the younger of the two brothers, inasmuch as he was seduced at an earlier age. The younger Flavius fell at once into that moral decrepitude into which the Roman people had been gradually descending. He lacked the tenacity of fibre which had distinguished his fathers; he displayed no fixed determination, no vigour or persistence in his designs. The contradictions which appear in this prince's career are the same we observe in the people generally. Such was his desire for military distinction marred by caprice and timidity in the pursuit of it; his literary tastes associated with jealousy of the free exercise of letters; his effeminacy corrupted with cruelty; his love of law and discipline distorted by wanton freaks of tyranny; his gloomy austerity alternating with childish horse-play.

Domitian, though he could not refuse to dedicate the Arch of Titus, which celebrated the conquest of Judæa, was jealous of the military renown acquired both by his father and his brother. He was bent on rivalling them in the admiration of the citizens and the adoration of the soldiers. The first attempt he made to gain distinction in the field had been cut short by the policy of Mucianus, who detained him at Lyons, far from the scene of contest on the Rhenish frontier. His appearance in arms in the defence of the Capitol had been disastrous, yet the court poets took occasion to celebrate his exploits both in the one case and the other. During the reigns of

Vespasian and Titus he had been kept, perhaps purposely, in the background, and had devoted himself to the cultivation of letters, for he was jealous of the reputation of Titus in letters also. But when he arrived himself at power his time, as he thought, was come. He put himself at the head of the legions on the lower Danube, to carry on the warfare which never wholly ceased between the Roman forces on guard upon that frontier and the Sarmatians, Dacians, and Marcomanni, who constantly disturbed and threatened it. Domitian seems to have taken part in two campaigns in these regions. As to his exploits history is altogether silent; his flatterers among the poets speak magniloquently of them, while the satirists no less keenly depreciate them. He gave himself the honour of a triumph, and assumed the title of Germanicus; but his deeds produced no substantial result, and at least one Roman army was overwhelmed with a lamentable defeat.

Domitian was more fortunate in his lieutenants in another quarter. Fuscus was 'devoured by the Dacian vultures,' but Agricola carried the arms of Rome victoriously from the Trent to the Forth and Tay, in Northern Britain. After the recovery of the British province by Suetonius the Romans had been content with consolidating their conquests. Their powers for offence had doubtless been weakened by the temporary withdrawal of the Fourteenth legion. On the return of that division they had pressed forwards, and had established themselves, perhaps strongly, between the Mersey and the Humber. Agricola had taken the com-
A.D. 78.
A.U. 831.
mand in the year 78. He first completed the reduction of the Ordovices in North Wales, and now proceeded to fix his camps on the line of the Tyne and Solway. Here he confronted the wild tribes of Caledonia, whose poverty could offer little temptation to further aggression. But their poverty made them ever restless, and no line of defence seemed secure against the savages beyond it. Agricola made this line the basis of further operations. In seven successive campaigns he advanced as far as the Tay, and perhaps his last battle against Galgacus under the Grampians was fought as far north as Brechin. At the same time he directed the fleet which accompanied his progress to explore the coast to the farthest extremity of Britain, which he was the first to prove to be actually an island, as Cæsar and others had declared on hearsay. Some of his vessels descried the Orkneys and Shetlands; some of his land forces from the Mull of Galloway beheld the coast of Ireland, a new region, which he was assured might be conquered by a single legion. But

he had already accomplished enough for his own fame, and too much for the satisfaction of the jealous emperor. Domitian sent to recall him. Moderate and prudent as he was, he had already anticipated the summons, and met, it is said, the bearer of it in mid-channel. He returned to Rome, declined all further promotion, and continued to live in high honour with both prince and people for several years. He died quietly in his bed, but not the less by his own friends and by his son-in-law, the historian Tacitus, his death was petulantly ascribed to the morose cruelty of Domitian.

However scanty were the trophies of the Germanic and Dacian wars, the people demanded shows and games in increasing profusion, and the emperor was compelled to plunder his own subjects to satisfy their rapacity. He required large gifts, under the name of 'golden crowns,' from every province and city, to bribe the soldiers and to gorge the citizens. A triumphal arch was erected in his honour to rival that of his brother; his colossal equestrian statue was raised in front of the temple of his father. All the nobility of Rome feasted with their ruler at an enormous banquet.

The victor in a sterile campaign against the public enemy levied his exactions on nobles and provincials; and amidst all the exultations of his flatterers indications are not wanting that the despot had now plunged with little restraint into a career of violence and bloodshed.

The consequence of this course of action became immediately apparent in the discontent and alienation of the nobles. But the cruelties for which Domitian has become specially infamous date more directly from the event of a military insurrection which occurred soon after the celebration of his triumph. L. Antonius Saturninus, a man of high distinction, who claimed descent from the families both of the triumvir and the popular tribune, was encouraged by the emperor's rising unpopularity to strike for power at the head of his two legions on the Rhenish frontier. His men were perhaps personally devoted to him; possibly they were willing to make a present sacrifice for the prospect of greater plunder. They contributed all the resources of their own pay to equip him for his enterprise; nor did he scruple to attach the neighbouring German tribes to his cause, and leave open to them the way into the Roman province. When, however, he was about to start for Rome, in the winter season, a sudden thaw prevented his allies from crossing the Rhine to join him. He was attacked by Nor-

banus, another officer, more loyal to the emperor, defeated and slain. Domitian had himself advanced courageously from Rome to encounter him, dragging with him a number of senators and nobles whom he feared to leave behind him in the city. When he found himself relieved from his immediate cause of apprehension he took jealous precautions against similar attempts for the future, breaking up the armies of the empire into smaller divisions, and forbidding the soldiers to keep any hoard of money in their quarters. He viewed all the chiefs of the state with increasing suspicion, and they retaliated by charging him, at least in their private circles, with atrocious murders and barbarous cruelties.

Nevertheless, with whatever personal fear or cupidity Domitian was actuated, in one respect at least his government was conducted on a public principle. His reign was an epoch of administrative reaction, such as repeatedly occurred in the history both of the republic and the empire, when an attempt was made to recall society to ancient usages and ideas. Domitian was, moreover, a disciplinarian by birth and breeding. Vespasian had retained on the throne of the world the homely manners of his rude Sabine stock. His sons, especially the younger, while they cast off the manners still clung to the traditions and prejudices of their fathers. Domitian was not deterred by any sense of his own vices from the attempt to reform the morals of his people. The attempt seems to have been sincere; his religion was a vile superstition, but such as it was he was earnest in it. Scarcely was he seated on the throne than he began to inquire, as chief pontiff, into the irregularities imputed to certain of the Vestal Virgins; two members of the sacred college were denounced, examined, and convicted; but the temper of the age was opposed to the literal execution of the appointed penalty of live-burial. The culprits were permitted to kill themselves. But the applause with which this inquisition was greeted by the savage superstition of the multitude impelled the emperor to make a third victim, and this time he wantonly resolved to carry out the ancient tradition to the letter. Cornelia was condemned and entombed alive, with a crust and a flask of water, in the subterranean vault prepared for her.

In the same manner the laws which Domitian enforced against adultery were revived in the interests of superstition rather than of morality. He sought to propitiate the divine patrons of the married state, not to secure the continency of the sexes. Nor can a much higher moral aim be attributed to other enactments which seemed

to regard personal purity; though we may observe with some satisfaction the discouragement Domitian gave in his legislation at least, if not in his personal example, to the inroads of disgusting forms of Oriental effeminacy. These edicts pretended to curb the shameless luxury of the great, and restore the modest dignity of ancient manners among the nobles. To correct the morals of the lower ranks the imperial reformer revived the obsolete laws against singers and dancers in the theatres; but in these smaller matters also the example of Domitian contravened his own regulations. He had not so many favourites as his predecessors, but among them was Paris, the actor, a man whose personal dissoluteness might seem to justify the popular charge against his profession. Paris is said to have corrupted the empress Domitilla, and to have been assassinated by the emperor's order. The proscription directed against the mimes was extended, according to ancient precedent, to the astrologers, and with these were connected the philosophers also. Apollonius of Tyana, the most noted of the moral teachers of his time, was expelled, with others of his class, from Italy. It is probable that the Christians were involved in a similar proscription. There can be no doubt that the doctrines of the Gospel had continued to make progress in Rome, and had withdrawn some of the higher ranks, men as well as women, from the ordinary usages and functions of their class. Domitian was perhaps really alarmed when Flavius Clemens, a cousin of his own, a man standing as it were at the foot of the throne, retired from public life upon what were supposed to be religious scruples. Clemens was sentenced to death, ostensibly for the crime of 'Judaizing;' but the Christians have claimed him for their own, and have enrolled him in their army of martyrs.

The manners of the times undoubtedly favoured some reaction from the wanton debauchery of the age of Claudius and Nero; but the reforms of Domitian were only tolerated inasmuch as they were not regularly enforced. Domitian teased and irritated all classes, and the cruelties he exercised upon the nobles were aggravated by the grim humour with which he delighted to accompany them. Nevertheless he lived himself in perpetual fear of the assassination which he was at last destined to undergo. He surrounded himself with guards, and took every precaution to protect himself by maintaining the odious delators, whom Galba and Vespasian had repudiated, and by bestowing lavish indulgences upon the soldiers. He studied to amuse the populace by the shows of the amphi-

theatre; his institution of literary games and prizes may indicate some higher aspirations, but their aim was uncertain, and they seem to have borne no fruit. At last the blow was struck from a quarter where he had least apprehension. It was reported, at least, that a child in his private chamber found there the tablets on which he had designated the empress and some of his own household for death. By these personal intimates and none others was the plot contrived, and Domitian fell by the hand of a freedman named Stephanus, aided by associates of his own class. The noblest blood of Rome was avenged by menials.

CHAPTER LXIV.

M. Cocceius Nerva appointed emperor by the Senate—Commencement of a series of senatorial appointments—Adoption of Ulpian Trajanus—Death of Nerva—Trajan's warlike propensities encouraged by the Senate—Trajan's popularity with the citizens—Panegyric of Pliny—The title of 'Optimus'—Campaigns in Dacia; conquest and settlement of the province—Trajan's forum and column—His numerous buildings in Rome and the provinces—Trajan advances into the East—Earthquake of Antioch—Armenia annexed to the empire—Death of Parthamasiris—New province of Assyria—Capture of Ctesiphon—Trajan on the shores of the Persian Gulf—Settlement of affairs in Parthia, and addition of more provinces—Trajan returns to Antioch, and dies at Selinus, leaving his new conquests in a critical state.—(A.D. 96–117.)

THE nobles seem not to have been unprepared for the blow which had thus fallen. Domitian had left no child; the race of the Flavii had come to an end, like that of the Julii before it. If any of the collateral branches of the family survived we hear no mention of them. The Senate had already taken its measures to assert the privilege of appointing an heir to the imperial prerogatives. Domitian was the last of the 'twelve Cæsars' to whom that term has been specially appropriated in history. The emperors who followed continued, indeed, to assume the title; it is probably owing to the fact that Suetonius composed the biographies of the first twelve only that the name has become their peculiar heritage. But in fact the appointment of Cocceius Nerva, an aged and distinguished senator, to the imperial dignity formed a marked epoch in Roman history, and it is not unfitting that the title of Cæsar should now fall into the background. The new emperor was neither the creation of military power himself, nor the descendant of a line

which owed its origin thereto. He was simply the nominee of the Senate, and with him began a line of emperors, too short for the permanent prosperity of Rome, which the Senate could fairly claim as of its own appointment. Undoubtedly the period of greatest happiness and prosperity the Roman empire ever enjoyed was when it was governed by the five emperors who owed their authority most directly to the free selection of that responsible body.

Doubtless it was of good omen to the empire that the first free choice of the Senate fell upon a citizen who was neither of Roman nor even of Italian birth. The Cocceii were, indeed, an old native gens; but the family of Nerva had long been settled in the distant island of Crete. It was well that the ruler of a worldwide dominion should be taken from one of the provinces, and from this time such, as it happened, was almost always the case. The emperors in long succession were henceforth provincial Romans, if not actually of foreign extraction. The Senate had, indeed, fallen in this first exercise of power into the usual vice of such elective bodies; it had chosen for its chief one of the oldest of its own order, and thus might have left the door open for future intrigues. But Nerva, if somewhat weak and vacillating in character, was a man of courage as well as prudence. His first act, in obedience to the requirements of his electors, was to heap indignation upon the memory of the murdered emperor, and to bring the instruments of his cruelties to punishment; but when the prætorians began to murmur at these measures, and demanded the blood of Domitian's assassins (for when the nobles were satisfied the prætorians were generally discontented), he boldly opposed himself to their violence, and did not shrink from offering his own neck to their swords. He was obliged, indeed, to sacrifice one or more of the victims required; but as soon as the prætorians had sheathed their weapons he determined to relieve himself from any further indignities by adopting the best and bravest of his officers, and offering him at once a share in the empire. M. Ulpian Trajanus was at the moment in command on the Rhine, but his name and character were well known. When Nerva mounted the Capitol and proclaimed his adoption the Senate admitted without demur the exercise by the emperor of the right common to every father of a Roman family, though in this case it implied no less than a pledge of the imperial succession. Henceforth the power of adoption, with all its legitimate consequences, was regularly assumed by the reigning emperor, and the Senate was content to delegate the functions it

claimed as its own, and elect, as it were, its emperor by deputy. But a good direction, at least, had been given to the process by which emperors were created, and it was long before Rome had any cause to regret it. The aged ruler was thus confirmed on his throne. The turbulent guards of the city trembled before the legions of a resolute chief, and shrank back into their camp. Nerva had mated his assailants; but his own game was nearly played out. After a short interval of dignified tranquillity he breathed his last, having reigned without offence to the nobles or injury to the citizens for sixteen months and a few days only.

The succession of Trajan was accepted without a murmur. The Senate believed that in his known character, as well as the choice of Nerva, they possessed a pledge of his moderation, and that he would carry out the principle of government through their own body which they had inaugurated in the person of the last emperor. His career, indeed, had hitherto been nearly confined to military service; though descended from an ancient Roman house, his family had been long settled in Spain, which was the land of his own birth. He was a soldier and a provincial, and possibly the nobles of Rome were not sorry to think that his tastes and habits might dispose him to place himself at the head of the legions at a distance, and leave to themselves the management of affairs at home. Trajan, moreover, was in the full vigour of his age. He had not reaped his laurels to the full, like Vespasian and Titus, but he was confident of his own fitness and ability, and instinct with the old Roman ambition to gain triumphs and annex provinces. Under the auspices of a victorious imperator the spirit of conquest revived. The Romans learnt to look back with some contempt on the peaceful policy of Augustus and Tiberius; they scornfully rejected the principle which had been recently recommended to them of confining the empire within the limits it had already attained. They incited their ruler, already prompt to anticipate their instinct, and encouraged him to spend the greater part of his reign in two distant and wide-reaching enterprises, the settlement of the northern frontier of the empire by the subjugation of the vast territory beyond the Danube, and of the eastern by the overthrow of the rival empire on the Euphrates and the Tigris.

The first act of Trajan, on receiving the reins of power at his station at Cologne, was to give confidence to the Senate by a promise that none of their body should at any time suffer capital punishment under his rule. He then proceeded to secure the Rhenish

frontier by the establishment of colonies and military stations. He threw a bridge across the river at Mainz, and advanced the outposts of the empire to Höchst and Baden, while he commenced at least the line of rampart which marked off the Agri Decumates, a tributary district between the Rhine and the Danube. He then quitted the province, and presented himself to the citizens at Rome, where he won their favour by his gracious demeanour even more than by the fame of his military conduct which had preceded him. So well was he assured of his authority over the soldiers that he ventured to reduce by one half the customary donative. Not a murmur was heard even in the camp of the prætorians; and when he handed to their prefect the poniard, which was the symbol of his office, he could boldly say, 'Use this for me, if I do well; if ill, against me.' The Panegyric of the orator Pliny is a singular monument of the popularity which Trajan at once acquired and maintained to the last. Courtly as it is in style, and perhaps exaggerated in colouring, the praise it heaps upon this favourite emperor (and no other of the series was so thorough a favourite with the Romans) is amply justified by the concurrent voice of history.

The popularity of Trajan was rapidly acquired. Already during his first brief sojourn in the city the Senate decreed him, in addition to the imperial titles, the special appellation of 'Optimus,' the Best. Nor was this a mere formal compliment. While the titles of Cæsar and Augustus, of Magnus and Germanicus, were suffered to descend from sire to son, this transcendent appellation was conferred on no other emperor. It is said, indeed, to have been usual for the Senate in much later times, on the accession of each new chief of the republic, to exclaim, as the highest compliment that could be paid him, that he was 'more fortunate than Augustus, and better than Trajan.'

But in the midst of these civil triumphs the new emperor was burning for military enterprise. To this course, indeed, many motives might impel him. We have seen how restless the legions on the frontiers had become. The founder of a new dynasty could hardly depend on their fidelity except by humouring their martial instincts. The expenses of a military empire required to be maintained by extraordinary means, and Trajan strictly forbade himself to levy fresh contributions from his subjects. He meant that his wars should be self-supporting, and contribute further to the wealth of the state by the new regions they should render tributary. In these views his subjects were well-disposed to second

him. Augustus was after all mistaken in judging that Rome had already reached her natural development. The spirit in which the vigorous advance of Trajan was now greeted by the Romans shows that they were even in his day a lusty and a growing people.

In the year 101 commenced the regular conquest of Dacia. This was the name given to the region which lies between the Danube, the Theiss, the Carpathians, and the Pruth, A.D. 101.
A.U. 854. extending over part of modern Hungary, Wallachia, and Moldavia, and of which Transylvania occupies the central district. The tribes which occupied this wide territory seem to have owned for the most part the sway of a single ruler, who was known to the Romans by the name or title of Decebalus. His principal stronghold was somewhere in the mountains that guard the valley of the Maros. His southern frontier was defended by the broad and rapid stream of the Danube, rushing for many miles through a narrow gorge, and beyond that barrier lay more than one difficult pass, while the country itself was generally covered with woods and trackless. Trajan collected his armaments at Sissek, on the Save, and descended the stream into the Danube. He constructed a road along the bank of the river, and erected a bridge of great strength and magnitude, the foundations of which at Severin are still visible when the water is at its lowest. In two campaigns he repeatedly worsted the enemy, and pursued him far into the recesses of his country, establishing himself firmly at the royal city of Zermizegethusa, now Varhely, where he afterwards founded the Roman colony of Ulpia Trajana. His final success was secured by the defection of the Sarmatians and Iazyges from the common cause of the barbarians. The hill-fort in which the Dacian chieftain held his residence was stormed, and Decebalus fell on his own sword amidst A.D. 104.
A.U. 857. the ruins of his capital. His nobles followed their king's example, first firing their houses and then handing round the poisoned bowl. The records of these campaigns are imperfectly gathered from the historians; but an impressive witness to them still exists in the Column of Trajan at Rome, which is encircled by a spiral band of figures illustrating their principal incidents.

This column constitutes, indeed, the most conspicuous monument of Trajan's victories. On his return to Rome he celebrated a triumph; he constructed an arch, and laid out a spacious forum, of which the column, graced with his own figure on its summit, formed the noblest ornament. At a later period this forum was further decorated with a temple to his divinity. Trajan effected the

complete subjugation of Dacia, and reduced it to the form of a province. He planted in it several colonies of Roman citizens; and such was the depopulation of the conquered country, or such the prostration of the national spirit, that the Latin tongue was speedily embraced by the people, and became so firmly rooted among them as to remain to this day substantially the language of their latest descendants.

After his return to Rome (A.D. 106) Trajan continued to reside there, as far as our information goes, for several years continuously.

A.D. 106. He was much occupied with the decoration of his capital.

The Ulpian forum occupied a larger space than that of Julius, Augustus, and Nerva together, and it is much to be regretted that Martial, Juvenal, and Tacitus, from whom we learn so much of the antiquities of the city in which they resided, had about this time all ceased to write, and have left us no records of a structure which must have been one of its principal features. Nor was this the only construction of this emperor at Rome. No reign, perhaps, was marked by more extensive additions to the existing buildings of the city. There seems ground for supposing that Trajan completed the still unfinished arch of Titus. But his princely prodigality was defrayed by the tribute of conquered enemies; he abstained from the usual resources of confiscation and taxation. His rage for building was directed also for the most part to works of public interest. He built for the Gods, the Senate, and the People, not for himself; he restored the temples, enlarged the public places, but was content himself with the palaces of his predecessors. Not in Rome only, but in many places throughout Italy and the provinces, his hand was conspicuous. Trajan's arch at Ancona still exists, and reminds us of the haven he there constructed for the fleet of the Upper-sea, while the port of Civita Vecchia is still sheltered by the mole with which he defended the roadstead of Centumcellæ. Another existing monument of this emperor is the bridge over the Tagus at Alcantara. A writer three centuries later declares of Trajan that he 'built the world over;' and he was pleasantly compared by Constantine to a wallflower, because his name was so often seen inscribed upon the fronts of his innumerable buildings.

After an interval of eight years, in which he had successfully cultivated the works of peace, and established a high character from the vigour and gentleness of his administration, Trajan quitted the city for the East, to baffle the intrigues of the Parthians. Backed

by the disaffection of the Jewish residents in the Eastern provinces, these people were preparing trouble for the empire. His first object was to determine the position of Armenia, as the vassal of Rome and not of Parthia. Chosroes, the Parthian ruler, was alarmed at his advance eastward, and sent to propitiate him on his route; but Trajan rejected the presents of the envoys, and held on his way to Antioch. The prompt measures he contemplated were checked, however, by the fatal earthquake which befell that city at the beginning of 115, in which vast numbers of the population perished, together with one of the Roman consuls. Trajan himself was with difficulty extricated from the falling ruins. As soon, however, as he could recover from this disaster he led his legions to the frontier of Armenia, and summoned to his presence the usurper Parthamasiris. The prince was required to take off his diadem and lay it at the emperor's feet. Nor was this enough. Trajan demanded the cession of the country he had pretended to call his own; and when, after grave indignities, he was suffered at last to retire, it seems but too true that he was waylaid and slain by the emperor's orders. Such an act must cast a deep stain on the character of a man who has so many claims to the title of a hero. We can only hope that the meagre fragment of history from which the statement is derived gives an imperfect account of the actual circumstances.

The subsequent exploits of Trajan were compressed within a very short space of time. After the reduction of Armenia he directed his march against the Parthians. His route was the same which had proved fatal to Crassus; but Trajan was an abler captain than the luckless triumvir, and perhaps he had less able adversaries to contend with. The Parthian kings, though still bold in language and haughty in their pretensions, were at this time broken in power. Nor did Trajan disdain to employ intrigue against them. He took advantage of the feuds between Chosroes and his vassal princes, and succeeded in crossing the Tigris and planting himself firmly in the region of Adiabene. Before the end of the year ^{A.D. 115.} 115 he had created the new province of Assyria beyond the Tigris to the mountain-ridge of Zagras and Choatres, and had well deserved the title of Parthicus.

Trajan passed the ensuing winter at Nisibis or Edessa. In the spring of 116 he descended the Euphrates with a mighty armament, which he transported by machinery across the neck of land ^{A.D. 116.} which separates the Euphrates from the Tigris, and so reached the

great city of Ctesiphon. The Parthian monarch fled into the interior of Media, and his capital surrendered without a blow. Leaving to his lieutenants the reduction of Seleucia and other places in the region of Babylonia, Trajan himself advanced to the shores of the Persian Gulf, and even launched upon them. 'Were I yet young,' he is reported to have said, 'I would not stop till I too had reached the limits of the Macedonian conquest.' But no such adventure was practicable. Seleucia and the tract behind him had revolted; and though the city was overpowered, stormed, and, as some say, destroyed, it was plain that the Romans had approached the limits beyond which it was perilous to advance. Trajan returned to Ctesiphon, placed a creature of his own on the throne of Parthia, and made a settlement of its affairs. But he was himself wounded in an attack upon a little fastness named Atra, and baffled by the want of water. Armenia and Mesopotamia, together with some portions of Arabia southward, were reduced to the form of provinces. The Roman empire was extended to the Persian Gulf, and its eastern frontier was placed beyond the Tigris. A vast limb was thus added to the mighty body, but it was a mere excrescence without vital connexion, and dropped off from the trunk almost before Trajan had regained Antioch. The East was in a state of turbulence and trouble owing to the intrigues of the Jews widely disseminated throughout that region. Trajan himself was mortified at the mere shadow of success which he had gained; but he was spared the agitation and alarm which soon pervaded the empire. He was turning his face westward, in the year 117, but could proceed no farther than Selinus in Cilicia, where he expired after a short disorder. His reign, extended beyond the term of any of his predecessors since Tiberius, numbered nineteen years and a half, and he had reached the age of sixty-five years, spent in almost uninterrupted activity. He possessed, indeed, less literary cultivation than perhaps any of the emperors who had reigned before him; and his manners, though kindly and gracious, were somewhat blurred by the rudeness of the camp; but he has left a higher name than any for generosity and manliness of character, and deserved to be the common favourite of the nobles and the people, of the city and of the provinces.

CHAPTER LXV.

Condition of the Christians in the empire—Pliny's letter to Trajan, and the emperor's reply—Martyrdom of Ignatius—Intrigues of the Jews in the East—The schools of Tiberias—Combinations at Antioch, Alexandria, and Seleucia, disconcerted by Trajan, revive again after his decease—Succession of P. Ælius Hadrianus—His remissions of tribute, and foundation of alimentary endowments—Hadrian's activity in visiting every province of the empire—He withdraws from the province of Dacia—He visits Britain, and fortifies the Northern frontier—He appears on the borders of Parthia, and makes a long sojourn at Athens—Suppression of the Jewish revolt—Akiba and Barchochebas—Roman colony of Ælia Capitolina—He regards the Christians with consideration—Hadrian at Alexandria—His intelligent curiosity—The Alexandrians insult him—He is mortified by the ill-behaviour of the Antiochians—Residence at Rome in his latter years—He builds the temple of Rome and Venus and the *Moles Hadriani*—He associates Verus in the empire—On the death of Verus he nominates T. Antoninus—He falls into ill-health, becomes jealous and cruel, and dies.—(A.D. 117–138.)

In their contest with the Romans the Jews had been greatly weakened by a constant disposition to inflame their rulers against sects and parties amongst themselves. Their political enthusiasts, the Zealots and Sicarii, could postpone every desperate scheme of national defence to get vengeance upon the Moderates or Herodians, of whom Josephus had been a conspicuous leader. In the same manner the most devout of their people were ready to denounce to the prefects and governors the pious followers of Jesus Christ as intriguers against the public peace. The Romans, after the fall of Jerusalem, had instituted inquiries into the expectations of a Deliverer so fondly cherished among them, and had specially prosecuted all who pretended to a descent from David. When, however, they failed to discover any schemes of rebellion among the Christians they were generally satisfied with requiring of them the same bare acknowledgment of the emperor's supremacy as was exacted of all his subjects. They were required to 'call Cæsar master.' The immoralities alleged against them were disbelieved or disregarded. The traditions of the Church, which point to a general persecution of the believers in the Flavian period, must not be lightly set aside; but we may conclude that it was only in Rome, or among Roman citizens in the provinces, that the government would interfere to prohibit their religious usages, however strange and technically illicit; for though the practice of Judaism was sanctioned, as being a

national cult, the same indulgence was not formally extended to a creed which was regarded as an irregular offset from Judaism. The case, however, was different in the provinces, where the prætor could protect by his decree the public tranquillity or decorum to the extent of proscribing all whom he deemed disturbers of peace or morality, or of permitting usages which were prohibited within the limits of the city.

We find the younger Pliny, as governor of Bithynia, speaking of the Christians at the commencement of the second century as a well-known class, and the law regarding them as well understood. When certain persons were brought before him charged with 'the crime of being Christians,' he simply demanded whether they were really such, and on their persisting in the acknowledgment he ordered them to be capitally punished. He applies, however, to the emperor for advice in this matter, for he allows that this treatment seems to increase their number. The danger uppermost in his mind was that which might spring from political combination, of which the government was excessively jealous. At the same time he admits and loudly proclaims the moral innocence of the people whom he punishes. Trajan, indeed, was satisfied with recommending mild measures, directing that the Christians should not be sought for, and that information against them—which came, it seems, principally from the Jews—should be discouraged. Still, however, if malefactors so bold and perverse were brought before the tribunals, the majesty of the law must be sternly upheld against them. The constancy of these sectarians inflamed, no doubt, the anger of rulers who were accustomed to more pliant submission. The confident anticipations of a coming Deliverer proclaimed from the Christian pulpits, seemed to them to be connected with the repeated threats of Nero's return from some mysterious retreat on the Euphrates, and with the intrigues of the Parthian court; while the conflagrations of the city and the Capitol, and the fatal eruption of Vesuvius, might seem to point to the final catastrophe anticipated by the prophecies of the Christians. The tradition of the Church that Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch, was examined by Trajan himself, and condemned to death in the arena, coincides with the date of the earthquake by which that great city was visited. It seems probable that this cruel prosecution was directly incited by the fanaticism and terrors of the sufferers from that calamity. Meanwhile the numbers of the Christians continued to increase both in the city and in the eastern provinces.

Multitudes of Jews, disabused of their national hopes, acquiesced in the success which had attended the sectaries who, going forth from the bosom of Judaism, had escaped the great calamities which had befallen the nation. Many Romans even of high class, first won perhaps by the teaching of St. Paul at their own doors, had formed themselves into an organised Church. The plan of the Christian hierarchy was quickly developing itself upon the lines which had been laid down by the revered apostle of the Gentiles. The dying exhortations of Ignatius derive their force and interest from their reiterated call to obey the bishop, and eschew doctrinal errors by holding fast the traditions preserved by the episcopate. It is clear that the announcement of this social organisation must have aroused unbounded jealousy in a government which could hardly tolerate a committee to collect subscriptions for building an aqueduct. But the passions of the populace, always intolerant of the claim to stricter morality, outran the policy of the government, and gave a deeper colour to the persecutions which broke out at sundry times and in divers parts of the empire.

The Eastern provinces at this juncture might well require the presence of the emperor in person. A new, an increasing, and apparently a dangerous society was striking root and spreading abroad beyond the *Ægean*. Its members, while professing outward obedience to the government, avoided public offices, secluded themselves from the mass of the people, and betrayed opinions of doubtful import, in which the majesty of *Cæsar* as well as the deity of *Jupiter* was secretly despised, if not openly abjured. The Jews had repeatedly proved themselves the most obstinate opponents of the *Cæsars*, and they were even now intent on forming fresh combinations. Driven from the ruins of *Jerusalem* and from the centre of their formal ceremonies, they had formed schools of opinion at *Tiberias* in *Galilee*, and in other more remote localities, where they continued to inculcate the principles of their faith, the duty of undying hostility to *Rome*, the hope of a great national revival. They intrigued to combine the remnant of their people, not in *Palestine* only, but at *Alexandria*, at *Antioch*, at *Seleucia* on the *Tigris*, in a general revolt, and at the same time excited the *Parthians*, the *Armenians*, and the *Arabians* to form a league in resistance to the ever-threatening empire of the West. These wide-reaching schemes had been disconcerted by the sudden vigour with which *Trajan* had broken in upon them; but his rapid and brilliant successes had lacked stability; and we have seen that

even the great conqueror found himself baffled, and forced first to suspend and then to contract his operations. On the death of Trajan the duty of maintaining or of relinquishing his recent conquests was imposed, as an alternative almost equally painful, upon his successor.

The successor to Trajan's purple was P. Ælius Hadrianus. His family was remotely derived from Hadria in Picenum, but had been settled for some centuries in the Roman colony of Italica in Spain, which had so recently given an emperor to Rome in the person of Trajan. Hadrian was the son of Trajan's cousin, and his family claim upon the emperor's regard was enforced by the favour of the empress Plotina, as well as by the ability he had shown in the high offices to which he had been raised. Trajan was himself childless. Both citizens and Senate were ready to acquiesce in the choice he should make of an heir; and though they might expect that his choice should fall upon Lusius Quietus, the most distinguished of his generals, neither the soldiers nor the people complained of the appointment, which Plotina promptly announced, of his trusty and well-beloved kinsman.

The remains of Trajan were conveyed to Rome, and deposited beneath the column he had erected. His statue crowned its summit, and a temple to his divinity was erected in his forum. Hadrian did not quit the headquarters of the army in the East till he had made dispositions for checking the symptoms of disaffection apparent in many provinces; but he promptly determined to withdraw his forces from the recent conquests of the empire, and divide the command among several lieutenants. We can hardly doubt his discretion in recurring to the policy of Augustus, and confining the possessions of Rome within their traditional limits. The execution of these arrangements may have occupied the remainder of the year 117, after which Hadrian repaired to his capital, where the Senate received him with acclamations. He commenced his reign with moderation, declining extraordinary honours, and remitting accustomed tributes. He extended further than before the principle, already adopted by his immediate predecessors, of supplying the necessities of the Italians by alimentary endowments, a principle which seems to betoken a growing consciousness of the impoverishment of the regions nearest to the centre of the empire.

Hadrian seems to have been a man of wider acquirements and greater general ability and activity, both of body and mind, than any of the rulers before him since Julius Cæsar. He took the com-

mand of the troops in various quarters, and visited every province of the empire, leaving marks of his progress in the erection of public buildings and in the organisation of the government. The moment of his accession was clouded, as we have seen, with public anxiety. Besides the disturbances in the East, the peace of the empire was harassed by obscure outbreaks in Mauretania; the Caledonians in the north of Britain were assailing the outposts of that distant province; and the rude horsemen of Sarmatia were threatening to swim the frontier streams of Dacia and Mæsia. The conquests of Trajan beyond the Danube constituted a deep projection of Roman civilisation into the wilds of barbarism, and it was exposed to attacks on almost every side, which even Trajan had been content to baffle by gifts and subsidies to the tribes beyond it. When these means failed to purchase peace Hadrian put himself at the head of the legions; but no sooner had he quitted Rome than a conspiracy was formed against him by some of his discontented officers, and he was obliged, notwithstanding his promise to shed no senator's blood, to put it down with severity. After his first successes against A.D. 118. the barbarians he deemed it necessary to withdraw entirely from the Dacian province, and even broke down the bridge which Trajan had thrown across the Danube.

After a short interval spent in courting popularity in the city Hadrian quitted it again, and betook himself to the northern frontier of the province of Britain. Here he put a check to the attacks of the Caledonians by the construction of roads and military stations, and by drawing a fortified line from sea to sea, connecting the camps of Agricola between the Tyne and Solway. He threw a bridge over the Tyne at Newcastle, and gave his own name to the station. The seat of the provincial government was now established at Eburacum (York), and the country northward was seamed with military works for the protection of numerous settlers who began already to explore the mineral treasures of that fortunate region. The modern gravitation of wealth and industry to the North of England is a repetition of what took place hardly less conspicuously eighteen centuries ago. From Britain he directed his steps to the South-west, and visited Gaul and Spain. Thence he crossed the Mediterranean, and succeeded in tranquillising the recent disturbances in that generally tranquil region. A still longer stride bore him next to the extreme East, where he suddenly appeared on the borders of Parthia. The policy of Chosroes was, it seems, vacillating; it was necessary to show the Eastern provinces that the Roman emperor was ever

vigilant. Chosroes was required to attend at a personal interview, and was induced to desist from an attempt to embroil the dominions of his greater rival. From Syria Hadrian returned homeward through Asia Minor, and made a lengthened sojourn at Athens, a place of great interest to his accomplished and sympathetic genius. After reaching Rome he soon diverged again, and visited Carthage before setting out on a second journey to the East, to Athens, Antioch, and Alexandria.

‘None perhaps of our princes,’ says a late Roman historian, ‘ever traversed so rapidly so large a portion of the world.’ The dates of these various journeys cannot, indeed, be clearly determined. But we may fix on the year 131 as the period of Hadrian’s arrival at Alexandria. Some partial insurrections of the Jews had already broken out in remote localities; but the revolt of Palestine was more desperate and formidable. Depopulated though the country had been by the terrible wars of Vespasian and Titus, the Jews had grown again in strength and numbers in the course of sixty years. They were led by the last of their national heroes, the gallant Barchochebas, the ‘Son of the Star,’ who, like other leaders of their race, laid claim to supernatural powers, and announced himself as an inspired deliverer. He was girded with a sword by Akiba, the aged teacher of the Jews, who had organised their schools at Tiberias, and sent forth on his mission with the blessing of the last of the prophets. The Jews were specially incensed against Hadrian, inasmuch as they regarded him as a proselyte to their faith, deceived, perhaps, by the curiosity with which he pried into the various religions of the empire. When he directed measures of repression against them they declaimed against him as an apostate as well as a persecutor. At last when they rose against him he sent his best generals and legions into the field. Barchochebas could offer no effectual resistance. Great cruelties were committed on both sides; but the Jews were everywhere worsted, and everywhere suffered the worser fate. The Jewish leader struggled with desperation; but he was at last defeated and slain at the storming of Bethar, and at the same time Akiba was taken and put to a cruel death. The slaughter of the Jews in their final contest is counted by hundreds of thousands, and their land was again depopulated. The dispersion of the unhappy race was now completed. The city of Jerusalem was occupied by a Roman colony, which received the name of *Ælia Capitolina*. A shrine of Jupiter was erected among the ruins of the Holy Temple, and Venus, it is said, was worshipped

A.D. 133.

A.U. 886.

on the spot hallowed by our Lord's crucifixion. But Hadrian had no purpose of insulting the Christians, whom he recognised as loyal citizens, distinct in creed and political feeling from the Jews. He discouraged the local persecutions to which, as we have seen, they were occasionally subjected. The presence of the emperor at Athens, and the activity with which he surveyed all the conflicts of human opinion, had encouraged the Christian teachers to address him as a truth-seeker himself. It must be remembered that their faith, which even at Rome assumed to uninstructed eyes the appearance of a Greek speculation, at Athens, the very centre of Greece, seemed to emanate directly from the schools. Accordingly, Hadrian listened graciously to the apologies of Quadratus and Aristides, who appeared perhaps before him in the actual garb of the philosophers, and the mildness he exercised towards their fellow-believers may reasonably be ascribed to the influence of their reputed learning and wisdom.

At Athens Hadrian had shown himself an intelligent inquirer into the highest questions of human speculation; at Alexandria, where he made a protracted sojourn, he appeared rather as an explorer of curiosities. The discussions of the learned collegians of the Museum and the Bruchcum were more frivolous than those of the descendants of the schools of Attic philosophy. The Romans were very commonly attracted to Egypt by the strangeness of its civilisation and the mystery attaching to its early history, and the more so, perhaps, because the policy of the emperors forbade any Roman of rank to reside or even to visit there without special permission. Egypt was the most important granary of Rome, and the capital might be in danger of famine if this region fell for a moment into the hands of a public enemy. The province was retained by the emperors as more peculiarly their own, and was administered for them by a Roman knight of their own direct appointment. They might further urge that the temper of its residents was turbulent; that Alexandria itself was constantly agitated by the quarrels of the Greeks, the Jews, and the native Copts, and that these last were exceedingly sensitive in the matter of religion and religious ceremonial. The Romans were little disposed to respect the mysteries with which they surrounded the national worship of bulls and cats and crocodiles. The Alexandrians retorted upon their visitors, as children of a later race and slighter civilisation, and were prone to insult and ridicule in their turn. They paid, it seems, little regard either to the favour which Hadrian bestowed upon their learned

men, or to the interest he expressed in their sights and wonders, when he visited the Pyramids and inscribed his name upon the vocal head of Memnon. When his favourite Antinous perished in the Nile, whether by accident or by an act of self-sacrifice, to save his patron's life in sickness, they outraged the wounded emperor by their ribald mockery. It is much to his credit that he restrained his indignation, and refrained from chastising the city which had so petulantly offended him.

Neither did Hadrian fare better with the citizens of Antioch. On his visit there he found himself exposed to the gibes of a frivolous people, who amused themselves by insinuating that he owed his elevation to the criminal affection of the empress Plotina. Hadrian did not protract his sojourn, but it is owing, perhaps, to the mortification to which he was here exposed that he adorned their city with no building such as he profusely lavished upon all the places which entertained him on his travels. From Antioch he again took refuge in Athens, and remained there in the full enjoyment of its arts and science for a considerable period.

Hadrian seems to have returned to Rome in the year 134, and not again to have quitted the seat of empire. His residence in the city was illustrated by the erection of numerous edifices, some of which still exist to attest the magnificence of his genius. The temple of Rome and Venus is now but the fragment of a ruin. It was, perhaps, the grandest of the temples of the city; but it is specially remarkable for its destination to serve the worship of the goddess Roma, the genius of the imperial city, which had become in the imagination of the citizens an impersonate divinity. The Moles, or mausoleum of Hadrian, which he built to receive his own remains, and to outshine that which Augustus erected for the Julian family on the opposite side of the Tiber, still constitutes one of the most striking monuments of the empire; though it is difficult now to realise in the shapeless bulk before us the graceful pile which rose column upon column, surmounted by a gilded dome of vast span, and terminated in a statue of the beatified founder, who was eventually laid below it. Besides these and other constructions of his own, Hadrian is noted as the restorer of many buildings of an earlier date, such as the Septa, the Pantheon, the temple of Augustus, and the baths of Agrippa. He piqued himself upon his universal acquirements, and affected among others that of architecture. It was dangerous to criticise his designs, and Apollodorus, the most skilful professor of the science in his day, is said to have been put to

death for an uncourtly remonstrance. The rhetorician Favorinus may have taken this untoward incident to heart when, being asked why he suffered the emperor to silence him in argument on a point of grammar, he replied, 'It is ill disputing with the master of thirty legions.'

We are too little acquainted with the interior politics of this period to know the motive which induced Hadrian to give himself an associate in the purple, or why he chose for this distinction a youthful noble of no special mark, named Ceionius Commodus Verus. He was reigning supreme in the loyalty of the soldiers, and the general pacification of the empire might relieve him from the apprehension of a rival imperator. He had ingratiated himself with the Senate, and as yet had created no disaffection among any class of the citizens. If the labours of administration were beginning to become a burden to him, the frivolous character of the partner he had assumed could afford him little relief. Verus, however, was at least harmless, and he did not, in fact, live long enough to degenerate into more evil habits than those of idleness and ostentation. We can only say that he seems to have been a personal favourite with his patron, who ventured to intrust him with at least a nominal command on the Pannonian frontier. But the A.D. 138. fortunate minion soon fell into a decline, and Hadrian expressed unfeeling impatience when he was found incapable of sustaining the weight of government. On his death, in the third year of his feeble sovereignty, the emperor would not suffer the opening of the new year to be profaned by tokens of public sorrow. Verus passed away like a shadow. Hadrian lost no time in nominating another associate in his room; he called together the chiefs of the Senate, and when he announced to them that his choice had fallen on T. Aurelius Antoninus, a man of mature age and approved abilities, they acknowledged that it was considerate and prudent. As a precaution, perhaps, against another premature decease, he required the new emperor to adopt two heirs, selected for him, M. Annius Verus, his own sister's son, and Lucius Verus, the son of his late colleague, the first of whom was a youth of great promise, the other still merely a child.

The life of Hadrian himself was not protracted beyond the middle of this year. He suffered much from maladies for which medicine afforded him no relief, and is said to have given way to excessive irritation and put many innocent persons to death. He had sometimes yielded in his latter years to A.D. 138.

jealousy and cruelty; but it is probable that the worst charges against him were coloured by the envy of disappointed candidates for the succession. We may readily believe that, despairing of medical relief, he resorted to the arts of the magicians, and when their aid was equally unavailing implored his own attendants to accelerate his end by poison. To one of his slaves, a barbarian from beyond the Danube, he pointed out the exact spot on his breast where the heart would be reached most promptly and effectually, but the rude swordsman fled from his presence. Among his last words, uttered perhaps in an interval of ease, was the playful address to his departing spirit which is so commonly associated with his memory.

CHAPTER LXVI.

Accession of T. Aurelius Antoninus—He attains the title of Pius—The name of Antoninus long held in honour, and the age of the Antonines esteemed a period of general felicity—Comparison of the two Antonines, Titus and his adopted son Marcus—Blameless character of this emperor—His policy uniformly peaceful—His authority everywhere upheld and respected at home and abroad—Encroachments successfully repelled—Lollius Urbicus in Britain—Wall of Antoninus—Philosophy of Antoninus Pius—Infidelities of his wife Faustina disregarded—His tranquil death, A.D. 161—Accession of M. Aurelius—He associates with him the younger Verus, a youth of little capacity—Verus, under direction of his officers, gains successes against the Parthians. The Roman army bring back with them the seeds of pestilence—Terrible plague throughout the West—Famines and earthquakes—Persecution of the Christians—War with the Marcomanni and Quadi, the Germans, Scythians, and Sarmatians—Revolt of Avidius Cassius in Syria—Dissolute conduct of the younger Faustina—Constant warfare on the Danube—Death of M. Aurelius—Remarks on the circumstances of the period—The ‘Meditations’ of M. Aurelius—Position of Christianity—(A.D. 138–180.)

THE adopted son of Hadrian was in the maturity of his fifty-second year when he was admitted to a share in the sovereign power. After the fashion then prevalent in the noblest families he combined in his own person the Gentile names of several ancestors. His style at full length had been Titus Aurelius Fulvius Boionius Arrius Antoninus, which he now exchanged for that of Titus Ælius Hadrianus Antoninus, to which he added at once the titular designations of Augustus and Cæsar. After the apotheosis of his adoptive father the Senate added that of Pius. His mother was an Arria; he was married to an Arria Galeria Faustina, by whom he had several children, who died young; but one daughter, Annia

Faustina, he united to her cousin, the young Aurelius, whom at Hadrian's instance he had himself adopted, together with a son of Verus of tender age. Of all these illustrious names the most interesting is that of Antoninus, which became, next at least to Augustus, the most distinguished of the long imperial series. Sometimes emperors passed away before this designation, sanctified by the noblest associations, was suffered to disappear from the official style of the Roman emperors. So deep was the impression made on the Romans by the virtues of the two illustrious princes who assumed the sovereignty at the death of Hadrian, whose blameless career has furnished the best excuse for Cæsarism in all after ages. The 'Age of the Antonines' has been extended in compliment to them to cover the longer period from the accession of Vespasian, or at least of Nerva, during which the empire was ruled on constitutional principles, and the claims of the legions and of the Senate were equally satisfied. The general prosperity of the nation and of the whole Roman world was assured by the peace which reigned between these two rival powers. The ancient world, perhaps even the modern world, has never enjoyed a period of more unbroken felicity than that which glided tranquilly from Vespasian to M. Aurelius Antoninus. But the real strength of the old society, bred in wars and nourished by sturdy exercise, became enervated by peace and prosperity: the smooth current of affairs was running more and more swiftly downwards, and hastening to the verge of convulsion and ruin.

The two Antonines who now step together upon the stage deserve, personally and politically, to be classed together. Both were philosophers in the purple; both governed themselves and their people on the highest known principles of virtue; the elder, indeed, was enabled by the circumstances of his time to seat himself at the centre of affairs, and rule the empire from his library on the Palatine hill; but Aurelius, though equally well disposed to study and contemplation, could afford himself no such indulgences, being too often engaged with the public enemy on the frontiers. Both of them maintained by their genuine moderation an unbroken harmony between the prince and the Senate. Both of them made the now customary declaration that they would shed the blood of no senator, a declaration which pledged them to economy as well as mercy, as it cut them off from the tyrant's resource of extortion and forfeiture. The death, indeed, of Hadrian had inspired more than one of the nobles with a lawless ambition. Conspirators arose

even against the virtuous Antoninus; but Attilius was proscribed by the Senate itself without his concurrence, and Priscianus fell by his own hand. Antoninus maintained the public establishments on a frugal scale, but he was magnificent in gifts and largesses. He acquitted the promises made by his predecessor, completed many of his buildings, and remitted the coronary gold expected on his own accession. When the treasury which he had received full from Hadrian became at last empty, he replenished it by the sale of the imperial furniture.

The internal history of this happy reign is entirely uneventful, while the foreign relations of the empire, if not wholly untroubled, were not such as to ruffle its general security. The frontiers, indeed, were never quiet. The Dacians were still restless neighbours, and the Alani, a name which had become recently formidable, were ever menacing the bank of the Danube and the ramparts of Trajan. The Nomades of the Atlas ventured again to encroach on the narrow zone of cultivation in the north of Africa. The mild and peaceful prince, who proclaimed that it was better to save a single citizen than to slay a thousand enemies, willingly adopted the policy which had been introduced before him, of purchasing the forbearance of the invaders. In Britain, however, Lollius Urbicus, after chastising a revolt of the Brigantes, carried his arms beyond the frontier wall, and completed Agricola's defences with a continuous rampart from the Forth to the Clyde. The district between the lines of Hadrian and Antoninus was rapidly filled. The spirit of colonisation seems still to have been active as ever. The provincials were anxious, perhaps, to escape from the burden of Roman taxation, and were constantly thrusting themselves even beyond the limits of protection.

The authority of the empire was now raised to the highest pitch, and acknowledged by the most distant nations. Rome under the least ambitious of her princes, one of the few who never claimed the honour of a triumph, imposed a king upon the Lazi, a people dwelling beyond the Phasis. She withheld the Parthians from attacking Armenia, but refused to restore at their demand the golden throne which Trajan had captured. She determined the quarrels of various Eastern rulers, and composed the differences between the Greeks and the Scythians at the further side of the Euxine. The barbarians sent their envoys with the offer of submission and tribute, which were quietly declined. The counsel of Augustus not to extend the limits of the empire sank deep into the minds of her

rulers, and impelled them to resist to the uttermost the tendency of the vast body to attract to itself the smaller fragments around it. The state of permanent equilibrium which the empire had now attained is attested by some signal monuments, such as the great work of Ptolemy the geographer, the Itinerary which goes by the name of Antoninus himself, and the *Periplus* of the Euxine and Erythræan Seas by Arrian.

The consent of antiquity plainly declares that Antoninus was the first, and, saving his colleague and successor Aurelius, the only one of the emperors who devoted himself to the task of government with a single view to the happiness of his people. Every step he took seems, as far as our imperfect notices extend, to have been weighed by a good heart directed carefully to a definite purpose. The time had come when in the state, and indeed to a great extent in the family generally, the sense of mutual rights and obligations made itself felt. Humanity had made decided progress among all classes. Hitherto it had been the greatest praise of a just ruler that he controlled the injustice of his officers, and repressed their wanton exactions. Now the procurators of the imperial fiscus were specially directed to exercise moderation, to spare the needy, to indulge the unfortunate. Every complaint against the powerful found ready attention. The informers, who lived by denouncing defaulters to the treasury, were put down. The salaries of idle or inefficient officers were reduced. Antoninus made himself personally acquainted with the principles, however imperfectly understood, of financial science. He mortified many, but delighted the general public by his considerate economy. He gratified the empire by the surrender of his own private fortune. The secular games with which he celebrated the nine hundredth anniversary of the city were worthy of the occasion. Antoninus continued to adorn Rome. To him are due the completion of Hadrian's Mole or Mausoleum, and the erection of a graceful column, inferior, indeed, in height to that of Trajan, or to that raised afterwards by Aurelius. He is believed to have built also the amphitheatre at Nismes, and the aqueduct of the Pont du Gard, the noblest monuments of Roman grandeur beyond the Alps. His reign was further illustrated by the progress of legal science, Antoninus being himself active in the administration of justice, and gathering round him the ablest jurisconsults of his time. The contributions of the emperor to the imperial codes are known to us in but few instances, but all these are marked by

A.D. 147.

A.U. 900.

a spirit of equity and humanity. In wisdom, science, and temper he equally deserved to be designated the Numa of the empire. But the great merit of this paternal ruler was his protection of the Christians. He confirmed and extended the indulgence already granted to them by Hadrian.

Antoninus was himself a cultivator of the learning and philosophy of his age, but he never apparently allowed the disputes and difficulties of the schools to disturb the serenity of his temper. The characteristic of this virtuous prince was cheerfulness. He was content with the policy of his epoch, content with its society, content with its religion; he was satisfied with the present, not anxious about the future. He combined the principles of the Epicurean with the practice of the Stoic, and this singular union constitutes undoubtedly the fairest compound that Heathenism can supply. The attainment of power had wrought a marked change in almost all the earlier Cæsars, and generally for the worse. In Antoninus it made no change at all. Such as he had been, kind, modest, and dignified, as a senator, such he continued to be as emperor. With his friends and associates he lived on the same terms as ever. Preceding emperors had mixed on an equal footing with their nobles, but he was patient with the populace, and treated their petulance with forbearance, even when on the occasion of a dearth in the city they assailed him with stones. His mode of life was simple and abstemious; his robe was woven by the handmaids of his own consort. To that unworthy consort—for Faustina was notorious for her irregularities—he was more than forgiving, and refrained even from noticing the scandal she brought on an establishment of antique severity. On her death, which happily occurred

A.D. 161. in the early years of his principate, he did not scruple to assign her divine honours, and abstained from forming another union. The reign of Antoninus was extended over twenty-three years. He died in the year 161 of our era, at an advanced age, giving to his guard, as his last watchword, 'Equanimity.'

The habits of mind which Marcus Aurelius had cultivated during his association with an elder and more experienced ruler had little fitted him for the active duties to which he was now quickly called. In presiding on the tribunals, in guiding the deliberations of the Senate, in receiving embassies, and appointing magistrates, he had shrunk from no fatigue; but his heart was still with his chosen studies, with the Sophists and Rhetoricians who aided him in them. The hope, indeed, that his peculiar training

might render him a model to sovereigns, and the recollection of the splendid fallacy of Plato that states would surely flourish were but their philosophers princes, or their princes philosophers, sustained him in his arduous task, and made it not unfruitful. He showed at the moment of his accession that he had effected the conquest of himself. Although, by Hadrian's express direction, the young Verus had been adopted together with him by Antoninus, their parent had resolved from the first to treat them on no equal footing. He had given his own daughter to Aurelius; he had associated him in the government, and admitted him to his confidence as his destined successor. To Verus he had shown no such marks of favour. As the weak son of a dissolute sire, he had placed him in no public post, and in his nomination to the empire passed him over altogether. But Aurelius was less stern, or less confident in himself. He suffered his affection to persuade him that he could guide his brother's steps and cover his deficiencies. He caused all the honours and offices heaped on himself by the Senate to be communicated to Verus, giving him the title of Augustus as well as of Cæsar; and now for the first time two Augusti sat together in the purple. He assumed, indeed, something of a parental relation towards his younger colleague, and betrothed his own daughter to him.

The treasury was full, and at the critical moment of the transfer of power the chief with money in hand commanded all suffrages. Already the emperors were troubled with the report of insurrection in Lusitania and of an irruption of Moors into Spain. The Chatti broke into Gaul and Rhætia; the legions in Britain offered the purple to their prefect Statius Priscus, and hardly suffered him to decline it. Aurelius contented himself with giving them occupation under another commander. At the same time there was serious apprehension of war with Parthia. Aurelius deputed to his colleague the care of defending the eastern frontier, with experienced officers to guide him. But the Roman arms met with a series of reverses. The defeat of Elegia on the Euphrates might recall the disaster of Carrhæ. Fortunately these losses had been repaired by the ability of Avidius Cassius before the arrival of Verus, nor could the young prince claim a part in the brilliant victories which opened the gates of Ctesiphon and Seleucia, and revived the memory of Trajan's conquests. On the conclusion of peace Verus hastened back to Rome, and was received by Aurelius with open arms. But the returning army brought back with it the seeds of a terrible pestilence, which shortly spread

A.D. 166.

throughout the West, and inflicted a lasting blow on its prosperity. In Rome the number of victims amounted to many thousands. The virulence of the disorder was increased by a long-continued scarcity. At first it was popularly attributed to the sacrilege committed by Avidius Cassius in the sack of Seleucia. But the victorious general was too powerful to be sacrificed to a popular outcry. The plague still advanced, and showed no abatement. Fires and earthquakes added to the general alarm. Disturbances on the Danube called forth all the strength of the empire to repress them. A victim was demanded, and the progress which the sect of Christians was evidently making marked them out to the people as the cause of the anger of the gods and the calamities of the empire. Aurelius the philosopher was a reverential observer of established cults. He invoked in aid of the commonwealth the rites to which he superstitiously ascribed all her fortunes. He performed a solemn lustration of the city, and delayed his departure for the war till he had celebrated a lectisternium of seven days. The cruel persecution of the Christians which he permitted and even enjoined can have had no other origin than the panic terror which he shared equally with his people.

In the depth of this sore affliction the emperors went forth together, for Aurelius scrupled either to send Verus to the war without him, or to leave him in the city. The legions

A.D. 167.

followed, drooping with sickness and despondency; reports from the scene of warfare were terrific. The audacity of the assailants, their numbers and organisation, the alarm of the provincials and retreat of their outposts, combined to show that it was no common crisis. But Aurelius was yet untried in war, while Verus had only shown himself abroad to earn general distrust. The citizens were not reassured by their departure; it could hardly be expected that the barbarians would be terrified at their arrival. But the name of Trajan was still held in awe on the Danube; the Marcomanni retired before the advancing shadow of an emperor. The Quadi offered to accept a ruler from Rome. The war was finished without a blow, even before the emperors had crossed the Alps, and left them free to return to the city, where, however, they busied themselves in preparing for an advance the following year into Illyricum. Here they were at liberty to provide quietly for the future defence of the neighbouring provinces. And on their return to Rome,

A.D. 168.

in the autumn of 168, Aurelius was relieved by the death of Verus of one source at least of anxiety and embarrassment. But the perils of the State continued to impress him more deeply than

ever. From this time he enjoyed no respite from distant warfare. The contest with his Northern assailants was chequered with many reverses; Germans, Scythians, and Sarmatians are represented as combined; their attacks seem to have been repeated and simultaneous, if not actually concerted. The central station from which he directed his operations was Carnuntum, the modern Presburg. The recluse philosopher devoted himself to his uncongenial task with unwearied industry; but he trusted more to his officers than to his own military genius, and seems to have evinced no special talents for command. The enemy gave him no rest in winter or in summer. He confronted them on the bosom of the frozen Danube, and on the burning and arid steppes. On one occasion the Quadi had surrounded his army, and cut it off from its supply of water, when a sudden storm filled the camp with seasonable rainfall, and disordered the enemy with violent lightnings. An event so striking was hailed as miraculous, and ascribed to the incantations of an Egyptian sorcerer, to the prayers of a legion of Christians, or to the special favour of Jove to the best of mortals, according to the diverse prejudices of the day. A certain interest will always attach to it as long as the column of Aurelius, still standing at Rome, presents among its sculptures, commemorating these campaigns, the figure of the Olympian Thunderer raining and lightning out of heaven.

From the Northern frontier Aurelius was suddenly called away by the revolt of Avidius Cassius in the East. The emperor had been long warned against this leader's ambition, but he had generously refused to credit or take precautions against it. Cassius was a descendant of the tyrannicide, and professed hereditary hatred to tyrants; nevertheless, according at least to popular rumour, he was induced to grasp at the purple by the enticements of the empress herself, who offered him her support and her hand. Faustina, the daughter of the worthless wife of ^{A.D. 175.} Antoninus, was as dissolute in her conduct as her mother, and Aurelius was as blind or as indulgent as Antoninus. He even took her with him when he quitted Carnuntum and advanced to confront the rebel, who had now spread a report of the emperor's death, and solicited his own legions to raise him to power. Faustina fell sick and died on the way, and her husband commanded her deification. Her apotheosis is represented on a fragment still existing of the triumphal arch which he afterwards erected at Rome. Whatever were her vices or her crimes, the Romans, who saw in her the mother of the detested Commodus, could

not fail to magnify them. Meanwhile Cassius had fallen by the hands of his own soldiers, who resented his usurpation. Aurelius was spared the pain of chastising him. He pardoned all his supporters, and, in the true spirit of a Stoic, proclaimed to the world his own spotless innocence by causing himself to be initiated in the mysteries at Eleusis. After making a progress through the most learned cities of the East he allowed himself once more to enter Rome and celebrate a triumph over the Sarmatians, together with his son Commodus, now rising into manhood. But the exigencies of the State could brook no further delay. From Rome he hastened to the Danube. The Sarmatians, notwithstanding the imperial triumph, had again risen in arms. The Hermunduri, the Quadi, and the Marcomanni were easily tempted to resume them. The efforts of the last ten years must be repeated with failing confidence and diminished strength; for the great plague had left its terrible mark in the exhausted population of the empire, and the treasury was doubtless drained by the charges of constant war. For three years the devoted emperor continued to labour for the safety of the state, but the toil was fruitless, and seemed well nigh hopeless. One considerable victory is claimed for his arms, and the historians affirm that a final triumph was in sight, and that another campaign might have actually won it; but if Rome had succeeded in imposing a tribute the subjection of the enemy would have been in nowise confirmed. The event, indeed, proved just the reverse. The great Sarmatian war was for the time concluded by a peace opportunely purchased by the Romans. This disgrace Aurelius did not live himself to sanction. His weakly frame sank at last under its fatigues, and he was rescued perhaps from a crowning mortification by a fever which carried him off at his camp at Vindobona.

The career and the character of M. Aurelius, emperor and philosopher, equally illustrate from different sides this epoch in Roman history. As commander of the legions he fought the battles of the commonwealth with the earnestness and bravery of the great captains of old, nor were the efforts of the imperator ill-supported by the conduct of the men and their officers. But the conditions of the warfare he maintained were against him. It is evident that the resources of the empire were reduced; the armies of strangers and mercenaries which he led were not endowed with the martial vigour of the old Italian militia. The races against whom they contended were fairly matched with them in personal courage, perhaps even in discipline, and probably far exceeded them in numbers as well as in the audacity which

naturally belongs to the lusty youth of nations. It became from this time manifest that the tide of victory had turned, and that the fortunes of the Germans and the Scythians were in the ascendant. This tide of barbarian victory could not but continue henceforth to flow, however it might occasionally be baffled and retarded. In the long period which followed before the final overthrow of the empire Rome did not want for brave defenders, nor even for military triumphs; but her action from henceforth was only on the defensive, and her defence was crippled by innumerable reverses, unnerved by her growing sense of weakness and constant anticipation of defeat. Such gloomy anticipations had already dawned on the sensitive mind of Aurelius. He was conscious, even before the mass of his countrymen, of the downward course on which the empire had entered.

The despondency of the philosophic emperor is strongly marked in the book of 'Meditations,' in which he closely analyses his own character and motives. The system of the Stoics, of which sect he was the last representative, was eminent for the self-inspection which it inculcated. In the mind of Aurelius Stoicism became more than ever a matter of conscience and a religion. The situation in which he found himself, and the necessity for active exertion it imposed upon him, gave it in his hands a practical tendency; and he thus escaped from the slough of mere quietism into which its precepts might most naturally have led him. Stoicism, the last religion of the Greek and Roman world, had approached very near to the furthest development of Buddhism. It was hastening to the abyss of the Nirvana, or self-annihilation. It was at this point of its downward course that it was overtaken and ejected from the world by the growth of Christianity. Of this young and vigorous rival it was naturally jealous—jealous of its spread and progress, and irritated at its hopeful and inspiring dogmas. The fastidious pride of the Roman philosopher could not brook the simple creed on which the Christian leant, and by which he ruled himself in action. To live for the state, to subject every passion to the will and interests of the state, was the highest social duty in the eyes of the Roman, and especially in the eyes of the Roman emperor. When the people denounced the new believers as offenders against the majesty of the gods of Rome Aurelius was not unwilling to punish them, as offenders against her civil principles. He gave his sanction to the most general persecution the Christians had yet suffered; the cruel martyrdoms they endured amidst the shouts of an infuriated populace, which at every event of military defeat, of

inundation or pestilence, devoted them 'to the lions,' are only too well attested; it is but too certain that the last and purest teaching of heathen morality issued in a deadly conflict with the truth in Jesus Christ.

From this period the history of Rome dwindles again, for the most part, within the narrow limits of its earliest ages. The emperors, as we shall see, are almost uniformly nominated by the armies on the frontiers, and govern Rome and the empire from the camps; the Senate, often reluctant and sometimes rebellious, continues to represent their authority in the city; but amidst the little scope which is given to its action it plays but a trifling part in the movements of the world around it. The ideas of the time are almost wholly moulded by the speculations of Eastern philosophy, and Christianity, derived itself from an Oriental birthplace, leads the way in directing men's minds generally to inquiry into the nature of the Deity. Morality among the Christians was a simple rule of obedience to a written law, and hardly required or admitted of scientific demonstration; but the Scriptures of the New Testament seemed to draw the veil at least partially from the deepest mysteries of Theosophy, and so far they fell in with the prevalent objects of interest in the Oriental mind, which was beginning to dominate entirely over both Greece and Rome.

CHAPTER LXVII.

The reign of Commodus—He is assassinated and replaced by Pertinax—Discontent of the prætorians—The empire offered for sale—Didius Julianus accepted by the prætorians and imposed on the Senate—Pescennius Niger, Septimus Severus, and Clodius Albinus each invested with the purple by their respective armies—Severus marches to Rome, overthrows Julianus, defeats and slays Niger, and lastly Albinus—His long and active reign—He dies at Eburacum, in Britain—His sons Caracalla and Geta succeed him—Geta murdered by his brother—Reign of Caracalla—He is assassinated in the camp—Macrinus becomes emperor.—(A.D. 180-217.)

M. AURELIUS was among the most virtuous of men, but there was an inherent weakness in his character, of which some traces appear in his writings, but which were manifested more plainly to his countrymen in the indulgence with which he overlooked the vices of his empress, and allowed himself to nominate a worthless son as his successor. Few could believe that he was really blind to the folly and

dissoluteness of the young Commodus, whom he recommended to the Senate on his deathbed, at the same time that he left him virtually in command of the all-powerful army on the Danube. He may have felt, indeed, that it was his first duty to avert from the empire the perils of a disputed succession. Commodus was accepted at least without a murmur both in the camp and the city. He hastened to renounce the fatigues of warfare, and at once purchased a peace which was not perhaps unacceptable to his weary veterans, while the Senate rejoiced to receive back into their bosom the child of a much-honoured emperor. The young prince, indeed, veiled for a season the most odious features of his character. He proposed to place himself in public affairs under the guidance of the Sophists and legists to whose care his father had committed him. For three years he continued to suffer the government to be conducted under the constitutional forms which the Antonines had respected, and it was only in the interior of the palace, and among his familiar associates, that he indulged in the vicious excesses of a Nero or a Caligula.

The young profligate might have worn away his life in debauchery, without affecting the general spirit of a just and moderate government; but a crisis abruptly intervened. His sister Lucilla, widow of the younger Verus, chafed at the inferior rank to which her husband's decease consigned her. She concerted a plot against his life, and the assassin whom she had armed proclaimed, in aiming the blow, that it was the Senate that sent it. The attempt was frustrated, but the suspicions thus excited continued to rankle in the mind of Commodus, and from this time forth he conceived a deadly enmity against the whole body of the Senators. He revived and encouraged the machinations of the delators, who denounced to him the most eminent of the number. He ridded himself one by one of the distinguished men who were administering the state in his name, and devolved the government upon an upstart favourite named Perennis, who soon requited his confidence by conspiring to supplant him. Perennis might hope to lead against the emperor the legions of Illyria, which were commanded by his son; but he was anticipated by the army of the still more distant Britain, which laid a formal complaint against him, and demanded his overthrow. Another revolt was planned by Maternus, and might have easily succeeded, but it chanced to be prematurely disclosed. The fall of Perennis only opened the post of minister to the freedman Cleander, who busied himself solely in amassing plunder from the nobles and people.

The recurrence of a pestilence and famine excited the populace to a formidable sedition. They clamoured for the head of the minister, —a new feature in the history of the city—and Commodus, after the manner of an Oriental sultan, gladly ransomed his life by the sacrifice of his wretched favourite.

The soldiers and the citizens were satisfied by these periodical concessions; the Senate suffered in silence; Commodus was allowed to protract his odious reign for a period of sixteen years. History recounts many instances of his barbarous tyranny, but it alighted mostly on those nearest to him. The cities and the provinces enjoyed an immunity from his caprices, and his position was secured by the amusements he lavished upon the populace. The passion for the sports of the amphitheatre, which prompted him to descend in person into the arena and contend, under due protection, with the wild beasts, or to slay whole hecatombs with bow or javelin from a secure eminence, made him no doubt a favourite with the multitude. The citizens had lost the last remnant of sensibility with which they had turned in disgust from the personal exhibitions of Nero. Commodus fought as a gladiator seven hundred and fifty times, but there was no Tacitus or Juvenal to be shocked at such an atrocity. He claimed the title of Hercules, which he inscribed on his colossal statue; and assuredly to slay a hundred lions with a hundred arrows was a labour worthy of the victor of Nemea. The deathstroke by which this despicable tyrant at last fell—despicable alike for his abject tastes and for his want of all higher and worthier feelings—was dealt at last by the hand of an assassin suborned by his own household. Marcia, his favourite concubine,

A.D. 192. concerted the deed with Eclectus his chamberlain, and Lætus, the prefect of the prætorians, all equally apprehensive of his capricious cruelty; at the same moment they put forth a successor in the person of Pertinax, prefect of the city, a veteran and distinguished senator. The prætorians readily accepted the nominee of their own commander, the Senate were rejoiced at the compliment paid to their political importance, nor did the people withhold their acclamations.

Pertinax brought to the throne a character resembling that of Galba, but his mind was more polished by intellectual cultivation, and he had less of the tincture of camp manners and discipline. He was no doubt an excellent specimen of the statesman of the day; he had had experience of military rule in the provinces, but at the same time he was versed in civil affairs, and had held divers offices

in the city. But he was not fresh from the camps, and had no military following. The emperor who was not at the head of powerful legions lay now at the mercy of the prætorians. This was the force which Commodus, when he relinquished the command of the army, had sedulously bribed and flattered. The prætorians had kept him on the throne in audacious defiance of the Senate. Pertinax himself had submitted to the indignity of buying their support with an ample donative; but as soon as they discovered that he was resolved to enforce their ancient discipline, and keep them under control, they became discontented, sullen, and seditious. The first care of the new emperor was directed to the recall of banished nobles, and the redress of the injuries they had suffered; he had found the treasury empty, and he devoted himself to recruiting the finances by legitimate methods; he once more repudiated the delators, and determined to direct his administration on principles of equity and economy. The wealthier of the Senators breathed again, confidence revived, and the empire seemed to be entering on a period of renewed prosperity. But all depended actually upon the humour of the prætorians; and the prætorians, as we have seen, were adverse. Within three months from the death of Commodus they broke out in open revolt. Their prefect Lætus was disappointed at falling short of the elevation he had expected under a prince whom he had himself raised to power; but it was the soldiers rather than the officers who rose in arms against Pertinax, attacked the palace, to which they were admitted by their comrades on guard at the gates, and when the emperor came forth and sought to overawe them by his intrepid courage, after a short pause fell furiously upon him and slew him. They carried his head in triumph to the camp as a pledge of their success, and proceeded shamelessly to make a public offer of the empire. Lætus himself discreetly declined the perilous honour so recklessly bestowed, but Sulpicianus, an aged Senator, himself father-in-law to Pertinax, was tempted to clutch it, and offered for it a tempting donative. While, however, the negotiation was proceeding it occurred to many that the sum which one aspirant proffered might be doubled by another wealthier or more ambitious. They ran out upon the ramparts of the camp and openly advertised the empire to be sold to the highest bidder.

A.D. 193.

A vain and wealthy Senator, Didius Julianus, was at supper with his family when the rumour reached him that Sulpicianus was bargaining for the prize with the prætorians, and the præ-

torians were themselves inviting a more liberal competitor. He was easily persuaded that he could sit securely upon a throne propped by the lances of his guards, and when he hastened to the gates, and advanced boldly upon the offer of his rival, he was readily accepted, invested with the purple, and presented to the Senate and people as the choice of the real sovereigns of the city. The donative he proffered amounted to 200*l.* sterling per man, and the number of the prætorians might be about 12,000. With their arms and discipline, and a strong camp upon which to fall back, this body-guard of the emperor could rule supreme over the population of Rome, nor were there generally any troops in Italy who could be brought effectively against them. But the civil conflicts of a hundred years before might have taught them that the power of the remoter legions was overwhelming, and that it was only when these provincial armies were arrayed against each other that the smaller body at the centre of the empire could hope to hold the balance between them. At Rome all classes of citizens, disgusted though they were, shrank in dismay from any attempt at resistance. But on the frontiers three separate and independent armies flew indignantly to arms. The legions on the Euphrates saluted their commander, Pescennius Niger, as emperor. Those on the Rhine conferred the purple on Clodius Albinus; the soldiers who kept guard on the Danube nominated Septimius Severus. These last troops were more practised in arms, and perhaps under better discipline. They were prompter in action; they were also nearer to Italy. Their leader, moreover, was a man of uncommon energy, and when the movement was once resolved on he lost not an instant in executing it. Many of the emperors before him had sprung from Gaul or Spain; the chief who now undertook to conquer Rome was by descent an African, and Hannibal himself could not have waged the war with more vigour and ability. Aware that there were other competitors in the field, he strove to anticipate them by advancing at once against the elect of the prætorians. Julianus was weak and vacillating. At first he engaged the Senate to declare his assailant a public enemy. As he still drew nearer he offered to associate him in the empire, while he tried to get rid of him by private assassination. But Severus paid no heed to his offers, and guarded himself against his treachery. The prætorians on whom he relied well knew that they were no match in spirit or in numbers for the veterans who were pouring into Italy, and when the invader had come within three or four days' march of Rome easily let themselves be persuaded

to abandon their wretched dupe and secure their own pardon. Julianus was taken unresisting, and put to death after affecting to reign two months only.

Severus was troubled with no scruples. He did not care to keep faith with the baffled prætorians; if he inflicted no military execution upon them, he degraded and disarmed and finally banished them to the distance of a hundred miles from Rome. He proceeded to remodel the force, which he now raised to the number of 50,000 men, and made it the great bulwark of his throne against the able generals and powerful armies he had still to encounter. Having thus secured the capital in his rear, he could choose at leisure between his rivals with which of them he would first contend. The danger from the last seemed the more imminent; perhaps he had more hope of deceiving the vain and indolent master of the Syrian legions. Pescennius Niger seems to have been a man of more cultivation and of more popular manners than either of his competitors; according to a verse which represented the current opinion of the day he was the 'best' of the three, as Albinus was the worst. Severus threw him off his guard by protestations of amity, but at the same time he continued to advance steadily towards him. Arrived within distance to strike the blow, he summoned him to surrender to the emperor acknowledged by the Senate, and attacked and defeated the detachments arrayed against him, first at the passage of the Hellespont, and again in the defiles of Cilicia. The forces of Niger were, it seems, easily worsted; the pretender himself was captured and slain. The long and brave defence of Byzantium, which only yielded at last to famine, may have brought the unrivalled position of that ancient city first into notice, and recommended it for the new seat of empire more than a century later. A.D. 194. Severus was at liberty to hasten westward, and he met Albinus, with his forces drawn from the garrisons of the Rhine and Britain, at Lugdunum. Strange stories are told of the gluttony of the Western pretender; and Severus, whose memoirs mainly supplied the historians with their account of these transactions, declared that he was intemperate even in the field. The slowness of his movements may seem to indicate a crass and sluggish temperament, but he was more of a soldier than Niger, and his troops were of higher mettle. A.D. 197. A desperate encounter took place between armies not unequally matched. Severus was at one moment on the point of defeat and ruin, but his fortune ultimately prevailed. Albinus was

routed, taken in his flight, and suffered death. The enterprise of Severus was crowned with complete success, not ill-earned by boldness, energy, and conduct. In these qualities, though in none other, the ancients might fairly liken him to the hero Julius. The victorious emperor was not distinguished by the clemency of the first Cæsar. On his return to Rome he made a searching inquisition into the temper of the senators towards him. Though triumphant at the retribution which had befallen the murderers of their own chosen Pertinax, and well-pleased at the fate of Julianus, whose manners had disgraced them, they felt no affection for the rude soldier who thrust himself forward as their champion. Many among them were kinsmen or friends of one or the other of his late rivals. Accordingly while he made a parade of pardoning a certain number whom he might fairly regard as his enemies, he nevertheless did not hesitate to put to death more than forty of their order. The senators stood aghast at his cruelty, but they were effectually cowed; and it may be allowed that the vengeance of Severus, which ensured the stability of his throne and the peace of the empire, was at least not impolitic.

The period of Severus's long reign saw the gradual development of a pure autocracy. The emperor spent little of his time in Rome; he left the government of the city to the prefect of the prætorian army, as it might now be called, whose military despotism was supported by the legal principles expounded by the great jurisconsults of the day. Indeed, after the fall of Plautianus, his earliest minister, the second place in the empire was occupied by the lawyer Papinian, who maintained the imperial prerogative to its fullest extent, but was at the same time personally distinguished for equity and moderation. Under this administration the state undoubtedly flourished. Severus devoted himself to conducting warfare on the frontier. He led the legions again to Ctesiphon and Seleucia, and impressed upon the Parthian monarchs a lasting sense of the power of Rome. In his latter years, when his strength was already declining, he undertook an expedition into Britain, and penetrated far into the unknown regions of Caledonia. The vestiges of Roman earthworks which may yet be traced as far North as Fife and Forfar can hardly be ascribed to any other captain than Severus. But he acknowledged that the safest limit of the empire in this quarter had already been laid down by Hadrian, and directed his soldiers to construct a second line of defences parallel to the first between the Tyne and Solway. The principle of warfare in these regions

was indeed defensive rather than aggressive. Severus died at his head-quarters at Eburacum; and 'laboremus,' the last A.D. 211. watch-word he gave, seems to imply that in his view the spade was quite as effective an implement of war as the sword.

The woman whom the emperor made the partner of his state was a Syrian, who bore the name of Julia Domna. Severus was much addicted to magic, and he is said to have made choice of this personage at the time that he was in a private station, because she was reputed to enjoy a 'royal nativity.' However that might be, Julia deserved to share imperial power by the high qualities with which she adorned it. But she had the misfortune to be the mother of two princes, one of whom became almost the greatest monster of the whole imperial series; the other might not improbably have equalled him had he not been cut off in early life by the hand of his own brother. The elder, named Bassianus, was not ashamed to assume at a later period the honoured title of Antoninus, but he is generally infamous in history by the nickname of Caracalla. The younger was called Geta. Both the brothers were carried by their father into Britain; but neither of them had any taste for military achievement, and Caracalla is said to have attempted in his impatience to raise a mutiny in the camp. When the emperor's death at length arrived they both hastily quitted the camp, and returned to Rome. But the quarrels which they had stifled during Severus's lifetime now raged uncontrolled. They could not even travel together, but kept apart throughout the long journey with separate establishments. In the city their feud was manifest to all. They lodged themselves in different portions of the imperial palace; and even consented, it was said, to divide the empire between them, assigning the Western half to Caracalla, and the East to the younger, Geta. Julia tried in vain to reconcile them, till at last the elder poniarded the younger with his own hand in his mother's arms. Caracalla did not shrink from avowing the fratricide, pretending, of course, that he did it in self-defence. He held up the memory of Geta to the detestation of his subjects, or rather he tried to extinguish his memory altogether, as far as he could hope to do so, by erasing his name from the monuments of the city on which it had been inscribed together with his own.

But Caracalla could not stifle his own apprehensions except in blood. He assailed in a frenzy of terror the friends and adherents of the murdered prince, of whom many thousands are said to have suffered death at his hands. Among them were the princess Fadilla,

the last remaining daughter of the emperor Aurelius, a son of Pertinax, and a descendant of the illustrious Thræsea, one from each of the most virtuous of Roman families. Papinian was another notable victim of this wild proscription. He had refused to indite a public defence of the assassination of Geta. Caracalla was, perhaps, the most frantic in his cruelties of all the tyrants who disgraced the purple of the Cæsars. He was more rude and illiterate than even Commodus. His countenance, as represented in existing busts, is that of a wild beast rather than a man. The prince must have been lost to all self-respect who could allow it to be exhibited to the dismay and horror of his subjects. He fled, indeed, from Rome, and roamed about the remoter provinces of the empire, without the pretence of putting himself at the head of his armies. His wanderings were those of a disturbed and restless conscience. Wherever he went he exhibited the same wanton tyranny; but the sojourn he made at Alexandria was rendered specially infamous for the frightful massacre of the people executed by his orders, in revenge, as is supposed, for some unmannerly gibes in which they had too lightly indulged. The reign of this monster, execrated both at Rome and in the provinces, and despised by the army, was protracted, perhaps by constant change of residence, for a space of six years. He fell at last on the borders of Syria, by the hand of a private soldier, at the instigation of Macrinus, who, while

A.D. 217. nominally one of the two prefects of the city, now shared the office held recently by Papinian, and was attending upon the person of the emperor. Caracalla, it seems, had been informed that a soothsayer from Africa had predicted that this officer should be his successor. He immediately determined to take his life, but Macrinus was apprised of his peril in time to anticipate it. The family of Severus became extinct; the throne was left to be the prize of the first usurper. Macrinus easily bribed the soldiers on the frontier to acknowledge the claims of the man who had slain the tyrant. Adventus, his colleague in the prefecture, set up no rival pretensions, and the Senate seems at first to have passively acquiesced. His absence, indeed, from the city presently encouraged the people to murmur at the sudden elevation of another African, of mean birth, and not even of senatorial rank. They beheld with commiseration the fate of the empress-mother, who, deprived of the support of both her sons, withdrew herself by a voluntary death from the indignities and the perils to which the assassin might expose her. But they took no open measures against him, and his own

fall followed so quickly that there was little time for the formation of intrigues and conspiracies. Macrinus was no veteran captain himself, nor was he a favourite with the soldiers even before he took upon himself the task which had now become necessary, of restoring discipline among them. He continued to make his residence among the military stations of the East; and set himself, not without caution and method, to reduce the emoluments of the legionaries. He began, indeed, with the new recruits only, but the veterans apprehended that he would proceed to apply the same rule to them also. Discontent was already rife among all classes, when a new pretender suddenly appeared under circumstances strangely different from any that had preceded him. But we have arrived at a point in the development of the Roman polity at which it will be well to pause and take a more general view of the situation.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

The empire of Augustus a compromise of the powers of the Senate, the people, and the army—Conflict of these powers among themselves—Under the Flavii and Antonines the Senate nominally retains its authority, but the army becomes really predominant—The provincials gradually admitted to citizenship—Edicts of Hadrian and Caracalla—Roman jurisprudence tends to place all the population under one law—Philosophy teaches that all men are equal—Eclectic spirit in religion—Christianity excepted from general toleration—The Pagan persecutions—Elagabalus, priest of the Sun at Edessa, put forward as emperor—Macrinus defeated and slain—Elagabalus slain by the prætorians—Reign of Alexander Severus—His amiable and intelligent character—He is killed in a mutiny, and succeeded by Maximin the Thracian.—(A.D. 217–235.)

THE empire, as constituted by the policy of Augustus, was almost avowedly a compromise or balance of the several powers of the actual commonwealth. It introduced no new element of power, no new constitutional idea. The authority of the Senate was represented as controlled by the people on the one hand and by the army on the other. The emperor, as consul and prince of the Senate, as tribune of the people, and as imperator of the soldiers, himself constituted the executive of each branch of the government. The empire was the resultant, so to say, of these three co-ordinate forces, each of which still had, or was feigned to have, its own proper place and function in the organisation of the state. Augustus

held the balance with care and caution. He fully understood the importance of each of these constituent elements, and in no single act of his long reign did he seem to incline to any one of them more than to the others. The people continued to regard him as their champion, the Senate as its friend, the army as its leader. His long and steadfast career was a marvel of constitutional government. It established the theory of the constitutional Empire upon a durable foundation, which was loyally maintained by Tiberius and Claudius, and was not materially shaken by the caprices of Caligula and Nero, nor, though rudely tried, by the military usurpations of the civil wars. Again and again the empire was seized by the legions, the consent of the Senate was accepted, but rarely waited for, the acclamations of the people were boldly demanded, and sometimes partially purchased. The Flavian princes stooped to pay court both to the nobles and to the populace; they professed still to hold the balance of Augustus, but they really leant upon the allegiance of the army, which had repeatedly sworn obedience to them in person. The people they held in less account. As for the mob of the city, it was enough to feed it and to amuse it. The old theory of the empire was partially warped, and the balance inclined more and more to the Senate and the army, to the army most of all. And so it continued to incline throughout the next century; the actual military tyranny of Trajan and the Antonines was most effectually disguised by the personal character of the rulers, and the consideration with which they still treated both the other elements of the state, while they suffered them to be denuded of all real power. But in the meanwhile a fourth estate was growing up and attaining weight and importance throughout the realm. Even from the time of Julius Cæsar, even from the time of Pompeius, the executive power of the state had been disposed to strengthen itself by the occasional introduction of new members into the body of the Roman citizens. Cæsar had thus enrolled large numbers of Gauls and other nations, as well as certain professional classes. Augustus had inclined rather to restrict than to enlarge the borders of the commonwealth. Claudius had leant decidedly in the contrary direction, and from his time forward there had been a pretty constant progress in the development of Roman citizenship. This progress was due not so much to a liberal policy as to certain fixed exigencies. Though the new Roman citizen became exempt from some specific taxes and tribute, the loss was more than made up, at least for the moment, by the sum for which he was required to purchase his

privileges. Accordingly the expedient of a large enfranchisement was repeatedly resorted to, and the measure was made, in fact, reproductive, by insisting that the child of a citizen who had intermarried with a subject should fall back into the lower status, and be induced to purchase back his father's franchise for himself. This extension of citizenship, though constantly in progress, did not really advance so fast as might at first sight be expected. But the provincials thus elevated in social position became no doubt a strong bulwark to the constitution under which they had obtained their advancement. They were for the most part devoid of the prejudices in favour of the old popular privileges which might still linger among the genuine descendants of the old Roman people. They were more accustomed to monarchical theories and usages. They looked to the empire and the legions as the forces which maintained them in their legal superiority to the almost servile herd of subjects around them. They were not indisposed in their turn to maintain the official organisation of the empire in the provinces; they tolerated the insolence of the proconsuls and the exactions of the military prefects, and contributed largely to the repression of turbulent ambition among the chiefs of the native populations. Under Hadrian this class of enfranchised provincials was virtually extended to embrace nearly every member of the free population. It was reserved for Caracalla, with the advice of the band of able and prudent jurisconsults with whom his father had surrounded him, to issue the noble edict by which the citizenship of Rome was finally conferred upon all. Rome from this date became constitutionally an empire, and ceased to be merely a municipality. The city had become the world, or, viewed from the other side, the world had become 'the City.'

This great social revolution had kept pace with the development of Roman jurisprudence. From an early period in the career of Roman conquest the governors of the provinces had been harassed by the conflict of law and usage as between the Roman and his subjects. The civil law of Rome had regarded the rights and duties of the citizen only, and its principles were wholly inapplicable to the great mass of the population abroad and even at home. Even within the city the prætor could not dispense justice between various classes except by the licence which was allowed him of moderating its narrow and exclusive spirit. The labours of the jurisconsults were directed for many generations to bringing the old Roman law into some practical harmony with the systems of other civilised communities. It was

under this actual and pressing necessity that the Romans developed that logical and methodical jurisprudence which has become the basis of the laws of almost all Europe in later times. At the foundation of this worldwide system lay the recognition, so repugnant to old Roman ideas, of the natural equality of all men. A declaration to this effect stands on the first page of the legislation of the Antonines. It proclaims that there is no essential difference between the Roman and the provincial; both are subject to the same laws and both participate in the same privileges. Even slavery is a principle of expediency, rather than of nature. But in advancing to this point jurisprudence was mainly aided by the speculations of philosophy. The great lawyers of the empire were themselves philosophers, and applied to their special science the principles they had learnt in the schools, especially in that of Zeno. The Stoic system, which strongly maintained the natural equality of man, had sprung up soon after the great conquests of Alexander. The principle itself was born of the sense of universal brotherhood, which that conqueror impressed upon the world by the fusion he made of Greeks and Persians, of Europe and Asia, of East and West. The Academics imbibed the principle from the Stoics, and both schools combined to disseminate it widely. The Romans learnt it from the Greeks. It was luminously expounded by Cicero; it was proclaimed as an accepted dogma by Seneca. It was sanctioned by the authority of the philosophic emperors. Hadrian, Antoninus, and Aurelius impressed it in succession on the whole character of their administration.

The current ideas of religion were at work in the same direction with those of jurisprudence and philosophy. The Romans had early found it impossible to retain their own mythological notions in their purity. They had accepted the necessity of introducing into the city the rites of many strange divinities, especially those of their Hellenic subjects, but for the most part they had compromised with the national conscience by identifying the gods of Greece with the gods of Italy. They proceeded at a later period to soothe the susceptibilities of their ruder subjects by a similar artifice. They proclaimed to the worshippers of Taranis and Hesus that these Gaulish deities were in fact the same as Jupiter and Mars; and thus, when they found it necessary to proscribe the Druidical priesthood, they replaced it with a hierarchy of Flamens and Aruspices. The religion of the Jews had been recognised by the state; it was never wholly interdicted at Rome, though it fell into

disrepute and odium after the great wars of Judea. Christianity, indeed, as the creed of a sect only, not of a nation, had not yet been admitted to the privileges of an authorised worship. It still lay beyond the pale of the law, and its votaries might at any time be subjected to persecution at the will of the emperor or the prefect. Nevertheless it continued to be generally tolerated. It was only under special provocation, or the influence of political alarm, that the believers were actually sought out for punishment, and the alternative of death or the performance of idolatrous sacrifices presented to them. After the pacification of the Northern frontier effected by Commodus, the empire enjoyed a period of general security, and apparently a revival of internal prosperity. Accordingly no inquisition was for many years made into the belief of the Christians. They continued to diffuse themselves throughout the realm, and were found among its highest classes. They claimed Marcia, the favourite of Commodus, as one of themselves, though the evidence for this equivocal honour is inconclusive. The Christian bishops, and especially the bishop of Rome itself, became almost a recognised power in the state. There can be no doubt that the manners and moral teaching of the Christians were beginning to exercise a potent and wholesome influence upon society in the chief centres of the empire. The religious sense of the intelligent classes embraced a broad and tolerant eclecticism; it rejected, indeed, equally all dogmas as matter of actual fact, but it was not the less prone to accept all dogma as the human interpretation of the divine ideal.

Under these circumstances Rome was found not unprepared for the strange phenomenon which now burst upon the world. The children of Mars and Quirinus were required to accept as their chief, their prince and their supreme pontiff, a stripling from Syria, a priest of the Sun, clothed in the Oriental tiara and linen stole, and invested by the devotees of his cult and nation with a peculiar personal sanctity; and they did accept him. Julia Mæsa, the sister of the empress Julia, had retired to Antioch on the fall of her nephew Caracalla. This princess, herself a widow, had two daughters, Soemias and Mamæa, widows also. The daughters had each a son. The child of Soemias, who was the elder, bore the name of Bassianus; the other, some years his junior, was called Alexander. Bassianus was himself a mere youth; he was recommended to the public function of the priesthood of the Sun by the beauty of his face or figure, but we know not by what acts his mother

succeeded in obtaining it for him. His temple was at Emesa; the legions there stationed, fatigued by the unwonted discipline of Macrinus, were dazzled by his appearance, seduced by his apparent likeness to their favourite Caracalla, and finally won by the pretence that he was actually his son. They proclaimed him emperor, and he assumed at once the purple and the name or title of Antoninus. Macrinus, who was at the time at Antioch, was dismayed by the general enthusiasm of the soldiers, who joined the standard of his adversary by battalions and legions. His conduct was wavering and weak; when at last he went forth to the encounter his own troops had lost all confidence in him; yet such was the effeminacy of the armies of the East that the valour of the prætorians who surrounded his person had almost won the day, when he himself abandoned the field. He was overtaken in his flight, and put to death together with his son Diadumenianus, whom he had associated with himself in the empire. The contending factions promptly fraternised with each other. The Senate was easily persuaded to acquiesce in an appointment to which it could make no resistance, and was glad perhaps to return to the principle of hereditary descent, illustrated by the august names of Severus and Antoninus.

But neither by these names nor that of Bassianus is the new emperor commonly known to us. The deity of the Sun whom he served was worshipped at Emesa under the title of Elagabalus, and the same designation was attached to his chief pontiff. The ideas of the youthful aspirant were wholly Oriental. He knew nothing and cared nothing for the principles of Roman sovereignty. He continued to serve his elemental fetiche, and introduced the rude black stone which represented the Sun in his country among the personal images of the Roman divinities. He appeared in the streets of the city in the loose costume of the Oriental priesthoods, painted and bedizened; but his luxury and dissipation were even more shocking than his dress and accoutrements. The rule of a wretched creature, debased by a grovelling superstition, by vile effeminacy, and a total absence of intellectual and moral dignity, was more degrading to the Romans than that of any tyrant or monster who had preceded him, and marks even more strongly the complete denationalisation which had befallen them. The Roman people had, indeed, almost ceased to be Roman. They had become a mixed residue of all races, among whom the manners of many countries mingled in a confused medley. From this period the literature of Rome

has entirely disappeared. All we know of the thoughts and habits of the age is derived from the scanty notices of Greeks, Gauls, or Africans and other foreigners; and even these tell us little of the ideas current in the capital of the world around.

The vices of Elagabalus were for the most part confined to the palace, where his lust and licentiousness reigned supreme. The disgust of all classes, both civil and military, became at last apparent even to his own household. His grandmother Mæsa, who seems to have retained a certain power over him, persuaded him to raise his cousin Alexander, a youth of better promise, to partnership with him; but no sooner had he thus elevated him than he conceived unbounded jealousy of his superior talents and popularity, and purposed to degrade him. But it was already too late. The prætorians determined to protect the younger prince. Though for a moment they held the life of their earlier favourite sacred, they soon had occasion to resent his interference with their caprices, broke out into sedition, and assassinated him. Alexander, A.D. 222. who also assumed the name of Severus, was readily accepted as his successor, and reigned, under the guardianship of his mother Mamæa.

The character of this prince is represented to us as the most amiable in the whole series of the Cæsars. His reign was undoubtedly one of the most prosperous. For many years at least the empire was vexed by no foreign wars. His subjects were relieved from the taxation imposed by the necessities of military leaders or licentious profligates. Great progress continued to be made in the digest of the law; the name of Ulpian, his minister, stands pre-eminent in the records of the Roman jurisprudence. Alexander succeeded to power at the tender age of seventeen, and he may be excused for the only weakness he exhibited in yielding too much to the influence of his mother, a crafty woman, who, while she refused the title of Augusta and the show of political authority, was for too long a period the actual directress of her son's administration, and seduced him into some acts of injustice and cruelty towards his wife and his father-in-law. There was, indeed, no escape for the emperor from the exactions of the prætorians. As soon as these arrogant soldiers found that the child whom they had placed on the throne was resolved to keep them under due control they murmured and mutinied against him. Their discontent, however, vented itself not upon the emperor, but his minister. The citizens actually rose in arms to defend Ulpian, but their efforts were

vain; he was seized and massacred within the walls of the palace. Alexander was saved, indeed, from the shame of surrendering him; but he was constrained to dissemble with the mutineers, and overlook their offence, till an opportunity occurred for avenging the assassination upon Epagathus, their leader. Nor, indeed, was the young emperor wanting in firmness, where firmness would be of any avail. The legions were corrupt, and in their impatience of inactivity often broke out into sedition. But Alexander was at no loss to repress them. It is with some agreeable surprise that we read how on one occasion he succeeded in quelling a tumult in his camp by threatening, like Cæsar before him, to address them not as 'soldiers,' but as 'citizens.'

Alexander modestly declined the title of Antoninus, which had been hitherto assumed by the princes of his race. He might shrink, as a mere student in literature and science, from comparison with the two first emperors who had made the name illustrious by their renown as philosophers. Alexander forbore from associating himself with any one of the schools. His familiarity with their tenets was no doubt slender, nor was he endowed, perhaps, with a capacity for penetrating deeply into them, or holding them firmly. He was eminently an eclectic in his tastes and views. He glanced with a tranquil interest at the writings of the poets, the orators, and the philosophers; he read with curiosity the accounts of the good and wise wherever they were to be found. He set up in his private chapel, as objects of devout contemplation, the images of the greatest teachers of mankind, such, it is said, as Orpheus and Abraham, and even Jesus Christ. In the attitude he bore towards the moral teaching of antiquity he faithfully represented that of his generation. It is gratifying to remember that he never deviated from the path of toleration to persecute the Christians. The temper of the times, cheerful and contented as at this crisis it generally was, made no such cruel demand upon him. He at least was better than Trajan, more generally fortunate than Aurelius.

This happy and tranquil reign was brought, however, to an abrupt and mournful termination. Towards the end of his brief career Alexander was engaged in a war with the Persian monarchy, which had just then risen upon the fall of the Parthian. He seems to have conducted his operations upon a large scale, but the victory, more signal than that of Arbela which has been ascribed to him, has no doubt been monstrously exaggerated, and the final result of his expedition was the loss of some earlier acquisitions in Mesopo-

tamia. From Asia the emperor was recalled to the Danube and the Rhine to resist the Sarmatians and the Germans. Of his operations in these quarters no account remains to us; but Alexander was prematurely cut off by a mutiny of the soldiers, led by an officer named Maximinus, a Thracian peasant by origin, a man whose gigantic stature and rude prowess had attracted the favour of Severus, and now sufficed to point him out to his rude comrades as worthy to command the legions and govern the empire. This obscure leader was saluted emperor, invested with the purple, and imposed without resistance upon the Senate and people. The degradation of Rome might now seem complete, when its chief was a mere illiterate barbarian, ignorant even of the Greek language, the common vehicle of all polished thought for so many centuries.

A.U. 235.

CHAPTER LXIX.

The barbarian confederations—The Franks; the Allemanni—Irruption into Italy—The Goths cross the Euxine and ravage Asia Minor and Greece—The Persian monarchy of the Sassanidæ—The Saracens and other Eastern hordes—Brigandage and general insecurity—The two Gorprians—Maximus and Balbinus—Maximin murdered by his own soldiers—The third Gordian made emperor—Succeeded by Philip the Arabian, who is slain by Decius—His persecution of the Christians—He is killed in war with the Goths—Gallus is appointed emperor, and quickly murdered—Rapid succession of emperors—Valerian and his son Gallienus—The thirty tyrants—Aureolus, —Claudius—Aurelian—Tacitus—Probus—Carus—Carinus—Diocletian. — (A.D. 235–284.)

THE usurper Maximin was followed by a succession of emperors, during whose brief and feverish or feeble reigns the empire of the Cæsars sank into still deeper weakness and humiliation. There is nothing in the slight account we have received of their character or actions to give us any personal interest in them, with at most one or two exceptions. It will be sufficient, for the sake of the ordinary reader, to record here their names and specify the means by which they successively obtained the purple, after first casting a general glance upon the relations of Rome to the communities around her. For the rulers of the state will henceforth be stationed almost wholly on the frontiers; their career, except when they are contending against domestic pretenders, will be spent in foreign warfare; the city of Rome, which has been the central point of our history, will fall altogether out of notice, nor will our attention be steadily attracted

to the revolution in thought and opinion which is labouring beneath the surface, till at a later period it suddenly bursts out upon us in the triumph of Christianity.

The increasing force and activity of the barbarians on the frontier constitute the chief political feature of the period before us. The innumerable tribes which had maintained for centuries a desultory warfare with the legions on the Rhine and Danube seem to have collected their strength in three confederations, each of which in turn proved itself too strong for the resistance which the successors of Cæsar and Germanicus could now oppose to it. Along the course of the Lower Rhine, from the Mayn downwards, the Chatti, the Chauci, and the Cherusci were the principal tribes against which, sometimes in combination, but more often in detail, the arms of Rome were directed. The nations in this quarter came at a later period to be known under the common designation of the Franks, and to have acted for the most part, whether defensively or offensively, in concert. After the time of Aurelius, or at least of Severus, the tide of invasion was reversed. The Roman province of Gaul became exposed to the repeated irruptions of the barbarians; the Franks, if baffled in their attacks on fortified places, spread themselves far and wide over the land; they advanced, indeed, rapidly from one devastated district to another, and made no permanent conquests; but when the resistance of the battalions on the frontier was overcome, the feeble militia of the interior could not stay their progress for a moment. About the period at which we are now arrived these rude invaders cut their way not only through the whole extent of Gaul, but penetrated into Spain; and at last reaching the coast of the Mediterranean, seized the ships in the harbours and conveyed themselves to the most distant shores, where they at last melted away and left no further traces. Under more vigorous captains the Roman power again recovered itself, and the actual limits of the tribute-bearing provinces suffered no permanent abatement. But the intrinsic weakness of the empire was made fully known both to its enemies and its subjects.

The tribes on the Upper Rhine and the headwaters of the Danube were known to Cæsar under the general name of Suevi. It is possible that the Chatti of Tacitus were also of Suevic origin. But these people had lost their distinctive appellation in the third century, and they, together, perhaps, with the Boii, Marcomanni, and Quadi, had become linked together in a warlike confederation under the title of Allemanni. These were the people who at this

period repeatedly assailed the provinces of Rhætia and Pannonia, routing or evading the Roman garrisons on the Danube, and threatening to burst the barrier of the eastern Alps. At last, about the year 272, the Allemanni penetrated into Italy and spread desolation as far as Ravenna in the Cispadane. But here again they acquired no stronghold and gained no footing. They yielded to the influence of an enervating climate rather than to force of arms. The Romans were again made painfully sensible of the weakness of the empire, and that the capital itself, a huge city which had far outgrown its walls, lay almost at the mercy of a desperate assailant.

At this period the name of the Goths, destined to become the most formidable of the barbarians, was first made known to the Romans. On the banks of the Lower Danube the Goths, and their kindred Getæ, appear in the place of the Scythians and Sarmatians. After the relinquishment of the province of Dacia the Danube became a feeble barrier against the encroachments of this people, who crossed it year by year, by boats in summer, on the ice in winter. The Goths were, indeed, daring navigators, and transported themselves fearlessly even across the broad Euxine. They ravaged the coast of Asia Minor, and sacked the opulent city of Trapezus. Again, they penetrated the Bosphorus, plundering Nicomedia and many of the chief places in Bithynia; for the Asiatics, in their fancied security, had long suffered their fortifications to fall into decay. In a third expedition they mastered Cyzicus, passed the Hellespont, and threw themselves upon the islands of the Ægean, the coasts of Attica and the Peloponnesus, and even scared the tranquil inhabitants of Bruttium and Calabria. A.D. 260.

Nor was the empire more secure on its eastern frontier. The power of the Parthians was almost in a state of dissolution when Trajan effected his easy conquests beyond the Euphrates and Tigris, and Armenia was reduced almost to dependency on Rome. But the Arsacidæ and their ruling caste were dethroned by a native insurrection. The Persians rose against them under Ardshir, or Artaxerxes, the son of Sassan, who restored the ancient race to its pre-eminence, and founded the dynasty of the Sassanidæ. This prince and his successor, Sapor (Shahpur), revived the full vigour of the Persian monarchy. They took advantage of the weakness which had in turn befallen the Romans, compelled Armenia to look to the Persian rather than the Roman power for its support, easily wrested from the legions the territory they had most recently acquired, baffled the attack of Alexander Severus, and ventured

to hurl back the invasion, and carry devastation throughout the provinces of Asia Minor. It seemed for a moment as if the empire of Cyrus would be re-established even to the shores of the *Ægean*. The eastern provinces were assailed by other external enemies. At this period the name of the Saracens first comes into notice, representing the wandering Arab tribes which harassed the outskirts of civilisation between Palestine and Egypt. The borders of the lake *Mæris* were infested by brigands, under the name of *Bucoli*, who threatened even the safety of the great city of Alexandria. The mountains of *Isauria* gave shelter to bands of marauders, who desolated the central districts of the Lesser Asia. The hand of government was almost withdrawn from the open country where it could exercise little power, and almost throughout the empire at this melancholy crisis the vigilance of the police was generally confined within the walls of the cities. The tribute which could not be enforced in one place was made to press with greater severity upon others. Innumerable finds of the hoarded coin of the period attest the prevalent sense of insecurity.

The emperors who give their faces to the coins, and their names to the annals of a period of above thirty years, may now march in rapid succession before us. Their reigns possess no features of interest, nor is there anything in the personal character of one among them to command our respectful attention. From the cursory glance we shall bestow upon them two remarks may naturally suggest themselves—first, that the chief who assumed the title of emperor, whatever may have been the selfishness of his personal ambition, seems never to have neglected the one paramount duty which had impressed itself on the mind of the Roman people, of defending the empire against all assailants, and even postponing thereto the care of his own interests in the city; secondly, that the men who assumed the purple in the provinces never contented themselves with obtaining a local sovereignty, never dreamt apparently of tearing a limb from the empire and setting themselves up as independent monarchs, but always looked to Rome as the true centre of authority, and assumed the titles and functions of Roman emperors. The usurpation of Maximin was deeply resented by the senators. Of this class was the noble house of the Gordians, of whom the father, now at an advanced age, was prefect of Africa, and the son held also a high post in the same province. These men found themselves encouraged or compelled to stand forth as the opponents of the Thracian barbarians. They assumed the

purple in Africa, and were warmly supported, not only in their own province, but at Rome also. Had they been satisfied with maintaining themselves in their own government they might probably have split off one continent from the empire. But such an act of disloyalty to Rome seems not to have entered their thoughts. They devoted all their energy to the support of the Senate, which promptly undertook to defend Italy against the tyrant Maximin; but they neglected to secure themselves against an attack from the neighbouring governor of Mauretania, by whom they were assailed in Carthage, the younger slain in battle, and the elder driven in despair to kill himself. On the arrival of the news of ^{A.D. 237.} this catastrophe the Senate, which had gone too far to retreat, offered the purple to two of their number named Maximus and Balbinus, the first a rude but able soldier, the other an orator and man of letters; but the people rose tumultuously and demanded that a third Gordian, the grandson of the elder, a mere boy, should be associated with them with the title of Cæsar. Maximus proposed at once to lead the armies of the Senate. Maximin flew from the frontiers to meet him, and advanced as far as Aquileia, at the head of the Adriatic, which he proceeded to invest. But the place held out gallantly, and the assailants suffered from want and sickness, till they broke into mutiny and murdered their ^{A.D. 238.} imperator. A few months later his successors, Maximus and Balbinus, were surprised in their presumed security, and overpowered in the palace by some discontented soldiers. The assassins carried the young Gordian to the prætorian camp, and required the Senate to accept him as sole emperor.

The empire now enjoyed a respite from internal dissension for five years. The government of the new ruler was ably directed by his minister Misiheus, who purged the palace from some of the stains of loose Oriental manners introduced by his recent predecessors. Gordian had the honour of repelling in person an inroad of the Persians in Syria. With the premature death of Misiheus ^{A.U. 244.} his good fortune departed. Philippus, an Arabian, the prefect next appointed, inflamed the minds of the army against him; he was slain by his own soldiers in his camp on the Euphrates, and Philippus reigned in his place.

The short period during which this adventurer held power presents us with no topic of interest, except, indeed, the singular circumstance that he has been claimed by some of the early Christian writers as a convert to the Christian faith. The Asiatic

princes who had recently occupied the throne had probably shown some sympathy for a faith which was itself derived from the East. Elagabalus the Syrian felt none of the repugnance of an Italian or a Roman to what he may have regarded as at least a native superstition. Alexander had looked upon it, as a philosopher, with kindly consideration. Even a few years earlier the court of Commodus is reported to have admitted some Christian influences, and a Christian nurse is said to have tended the childhood of Caracalla. If little reliance is to be placed on the sources from which these rumours have reached us, there seems at least reason to believe that the disciples of the new faith continued to increase in number during the long respite from persecution which they had enjoyed since the fanatical outburst under Aurelius, and had suffered some of the natural consequences of prosperity and advancing consideration. Their constancy required to be braced by further trials, and further trials were now impending over them. Whatever Philip's private opinions may have been, he did not hesitate to propitiate the gods of Rome by a solemn celebration of the most august of all their

A.D. 248. rites. He fixed upon the 21st day of April, in the year

A.U. 1001. 248 of our era, as the thousandth anniversary of the foundation of the city, and performed the Secular games with all the pomp and significance of the earlier festivals of Augustus, Claudius, and Domitian. He was anxious, perhaps, to reassure the citizens at a moment when the Goths, a new and formidable enemy, were threatening the empire on the side of Mæsia. But it was necessary, in the first place, to quell a mutiny of his own troops in that quarter, and to put down Marinus, the pretender whom they opposed to him; and Decius, the officer by whose hands he overthrew

A.D. 249. this enemy, was himself accepted by the soldiers, and made, perhaps unwillingly, to turn against him. Decius led the Mæsiian army to the frontiers of Italy. Philip marched from Rome to meet him, but was defeated and slain at Verona.

Once more, and perhaps for the last time, the Romans saw at their head an emperor of the best Roman blood, who was also a captain of resolution and vigour. Decius could boast that he was descended from the old plebeian house which had produced historic examples of patriotic devotion. Nor had he himself sought the elevation to which he had been raised by the pride or cupidity of his comrades. He seems to have firmly embraced the opinion, which was now the last resource of patriotic minds, that Rome could only be saved by a victorious army, and the army be only kept under

efficient discipline by stern recurrence to the principles of the true Roman polity. Decius discarded, perhaps contemptuously, the philosophic tolerance of his predecessors. For the defence of Rome he appealed boldly to the gods of Rome. While he was straitening the bands of discipline in the camp, and preparing for the imminent invasion of the Goths, he insisted firmly on the submission of the Christians to the ancient ordinances of the state, and tested their obedience by vows and sacrifices. The believers, who had lapsed into a state of placid security, were rudely awakened. A persecution ensued, sharper and more widely extended than any that had preceded it. Such was the result, as on former occasions, of the general alarm at the perils of the crisis. These perils were more obvious and more imminent than ever, and so were the precautions they inspired more cruel and stringent. The storm had no doubt the effect of winnowing the multitude of professing disciples, but it drew the genuine remnant more closely together, confirmed their constancy by many noble examples, and perhaps rather increased than diminished their number. The storm, severe as it was, proved transient. The reign of the persecutor was speedily cut short. He hastily quitted Rome, and applied himself to the protection of the Mæsan frontier, leaving the government of the city and the prosecution of domestic reforms to the care of Valerian, for whom he revived the office of censor. He formed his veteran legions into a powerful instrument of defence, and impeded at least, in three campaigns, the ever-pressing encroachments of the fatal enemy. Decius gained indeed A.D. 251. the distinction, which perhaps he coveted, of falling first of all the Roman emperors on the field of battle. A gallant son perished with him; but the devotion of these latter Decii secured no triumph to the arms of the republic.

The Senate promptly supplied a successor in an experienced officer named Gallus, and the legions this time acquiesced. But the appointment was hardly a fortunate one. The new chief of the army consented at once to purchase peace by the stipulation of an annual tribute. The Senate and citizens murmured; the barbarians themselves were dissatisfied, and the same or other bands of warriors quickly renewed hostilities. Æmilianus, an officer of the army on the Danube, revolted, and led the troops against the emperor, who was promptly murdered. The Senate accepted the fortunate pretender; but Valerianus brought A.D. 253. against him the army of the Rhine, and before the mighty masses could meet Æmilianus too had fallen by assassination. Valerian,

with his son Gallienus, became the next inheritor of the purple, which he wore for the period, now unusually long, of seven years. He was a man not destitute of civic virtues, and bore his dignity with grace and moderation, while his unworthy son indulged in effeminate dissipation. But he was incapable of coping with the barbarians. During his reign the frontier provinces were overrun by the Franks and Goths, who were sometimes repulsed by his lieutenants, sometimes bribed. At last he girded on the sword and marched against Sapor, who, after conquering Mesopotamia, and reducing Armenia to a state of dependence, awaited the encounter beyond the Euphrates. In the battle which ensued at Edessa the Roman emperor was defeated and captured, and it is related that the Persian tyrant inflicted on him the most dire indignities, and placed his feet on his captive's back in mounting into his saddle. Valerian died, and his skin, it is said, was stuffed, tanned, and painted purple, and suspended conspicuously in a temple. Such degradation might be even worse than that inflicted on Crassus. But the self-degradation of Valerian was such as the fallen triumvir would have spurned. He betrayed to his conqueror the rich city of Antioch, and the strong defiles of the Taurus. Sapor effected some rapid conquests in Asia Minor, but was satisfied with carrying off a multitude of slaves to Persia, and sought to make no permanent occupation. Gallienus, utterly indolent and careless, made no attempt to recover the honour of the empire, which was better sustained by Odenathus, a Syrian chieftain, who defended Palmyra, and at last, despairing of assistance from Rome, assumed the title of emperor within the limits of his own dependency.

Gallienus still lingered in Rome immersed in vicious pleasures, varied, indeed, by some converse with the philosophers of the day, and the composition of some trifling but graceful poetry. He seems to have been propped on the throne by the very number of the pretenders who rose in all parts of the empire, and at the bidding each of his own battalions hastened to assume the purple. The Roman writers have fancifully given to these the name of the thirty tyrants; a more exact computation reduces their number to nineteen. Of these one or two only were men of ancient family and high lineage. Postumus and Victorinus, with his mother Victoria, in Gaul, were perhaps the only ones among them who limited their ambition to a provincial sovereignty. One after another the chiefs who thus asserted their claims to empire in the East and the West, in Illyricum, in Isauria, and Africa, with names unworthy of being

recorded, fell by the arms of one or another of the emperor's more loyal lieutenants, or of their own soldiers. Odenathus alone was summoned by Gallienus to his assistance, and honoured with the title of Augustus. The Syrian prince and his gallant queen Zenobia were the most distinguished characters of that obscure but turbulent epoch.

The slaughter of Gallienus followed in due course. When at last he took up arms, and rushed from the city to the frontiers of Italy to encounter the pretender Aureolus, he soon fell, by chance or more probably through treachery, in a tumult within his A.D. 268. own camp. In his last moments he performed the only good deed of his career, in nominating for his successor a man of courage and ability, though of mean birth and foreign extraction. With Claudius, who obtained by one signal victory the surname of Gothicus, commences a brief and fitful revival of the military glories of the commonwealth. The contests of so many chiefs of the armies with one another had brought military ability to the front. If the aspirants to power had themselves rapidly perished, they had no doubt thrust forward the best of their lieutenants, and exercised the bravest of their legions. The emperor, at the head of his chosen forces, was further dis-embarrassed of the presence of vain and useless magnates of the city; for, among other caprices, Gallienus had enacted that henceforth the senators should take no part in military affairs. It seems that the residents in Rome were not indisposed to accept this degrading restriction. Life in Rome was from this time busied with no more vigorous pursuits than the study of ideas and opinions, and the war of words, which was still agitated with unabated restlessness. The New Platonists, on the one hand, the Christian sects on the other, supplied the lettered class with congenial mental occupation, and the defence as well as the government of the empire was left entirely to provincials and even strangers. The thirty tyrants were for the most part of foreign extraction, and they had maintained themselves by the arms of Franks, Goths, Quadi, or Allemanni, whom they subsidized each in his own behoof.

Claudius had routed the Goths in the great battle of Naissus in Mæsia, and was preparing to advance into Asia to check the Persians, and at the same time to reduce to subjection Odenathus and Zenobia. But he, too, was cut off prematurely, A.D. 270. not by the sword or dagger, but by a natural death, while marshalling his forces at Sirmium on the Danube, the birthplace of the gallant captain Aurelian, whom he nominated for his successor.

This man, the son of an Illyrian peasant, proved himself one of the ablest chiefs of the Roman legions. He defeated the Goths on the Danube, but at the same time he recognised the necessity of finally withdrawing the outposts of the empire altogether from the northern bank of that river. Aurelian had no scruple in the employment of barbarians. With his legions now largely reinforced he hastened to the East, and encountered no unworthy rival in Zenobia, queen of Palmyra, whose husband had lately deceased. Zenobia is illustrious both for her political capacity and also for her devotion to the teaching of the philosopher Longinus, whom she employed as her minister. She resisted the Roman emperor in the field, but was finally overcome and carried off to Rome to be exhibited in a triumph. Tetricus, who had made head against the legitimate emperor in Gaul, was paraded through the streets at the same time; but Aurelian was placable as well as brave, and allowed both his rivals to enjoy their lives in a private station. At the same time he was rigid and even cruel in maintaining the discipline of his armies, and he was preparing to carry out a virulent persecution of the Christians, when he fell by assassination in his tent. The

soldiers whom he was leading against the Persians resented and avenged his loss. They paid a high tribute of respect to his memory by awaiting for six months the election of his successor by the Senate. One substantial monument of his short reign remains in the existing walls of Rome, which, though more than once rebuilt since his time, still stand for the most part on the lines he traced for them, when the recent invasion of the Allemanni, who penetrated into the heart of Italy, induced the government to provide for the security of the capital. The walls of Servius had been outgrown in all directions for several centuries, and in fact had almost disappeared under the soil, from which some fragments only have been painfully uncovered in recent times. The walls of Aurelian include a space of three or four times the area of the Servian, and have a circuit of twelve or thirteen miles, nor is it probable that the suburbs ever extended far beyond them. The establishment of the 'City of Aurelian' (Orleans) on the foundations of the ancient Genabum, was another of this emperor's works which deserves a passing notice. He had combated rival emperors within the province of Gaul, and had vigorously repressed the encroachments of the Franks and Allemanni on the frontier. It was with a view both to internal and external defence that he placed this fortress in its commanding position in the centre of the province, where it has retained

its importance, together with the name of its founder, to the present day.

The army was for the moment tired of appointing emperors who seemed destined to be so soon lost to it. It allowed the Senate to choose Aurelian's next successor, and the Senate chose with patriotic intentions a man of probity as well of ancient Roman family, who bore the name and regarded himself as a kinsman of the illustrious historian Cornelius Tacitus. But the new chief of the state was over seventy years of age, and was physically unequal to the fatigues of war which he felt it his duty to encounter. He conducted an expedition against the Scythian Alani, but succumbed in the course of a few months. Again the army undertook to create an emperor, and made an excellent choice in Aurelius Probus, A.D. 276. the bravest and most successful officer of the late wars against the Germans. The Senate loyally accepted the appointment, while Florianus, the brother of Tacitus, who had assumed the purple without authority either from the one power or the other, relinquished the contest he had provoked by a voluntary death. Probus, like Aurelian, was a native of Sirmium. He proved himself worthy of military rule, the only rule now possible, by his skill, his bravery, and his hardy virtues. During a short but active reign of six years he defeated the Germans on the Rhine and Danube, and constructed or repaired the rampart which connected those frontier streams over a course of two hundred miles. He first overthrew the Goths, and then, passing from the West to the East, led his forces against the Persians. From this enemy he extorted an honourable peace; and having put down some competitors for power among his own officers, employed his legions in draining marshes and planting vineyards. Probus, it is said, restored to the countries beyond the Alps, to Pannonia and Mæsia, in Spain, Gaul, and Britain, the liberty of cultivating the vine, which Domitian, in the interest of Italian monopolists, had taken from them. But the discipline which this veteran enforced, and the wholesome labours he exacted, alike disgusted his licentious warriors, and Probus, who never quitted his camp for the pleasures of the capital, lost his life in a mutiny.

The prize of empire fell next to Gaul. The captain upon whom the legions fixed for a successor to the favourite whom they had so wantonly sacrificed was Carus, a native of Narbonne. The senators accepted their choice without remonstrance, and were flattered, perhaps, by the claim he made to be at least by descent a Roman. Caius was no unworthy successor to Probus, whose military

virtues he emulated. Like him he paid no attention to Rome, and the nobles of the city had discovered that if they lost in dignity by the absence of the emperor, they gained at least in ease and security. They were gratified, perhaps, by the high repute of Numerianus, one of their new ruler's sons, in oratory, or rather in declamation, in which, indeed, the schools of southern Gaul had attained a high proficiency. Carus left his elder son Carinus in charge of the western provinces, but he was not insensible to the violent and brutal temper of the young Caesar, and would willingly have kept him under his own control, could he have spared him from his command, while intent himself upon an expedition against the Persians. Carus is reported to have been the first of the emperors who penetrated in person beyond the city of Ctesiphon on the Tigris; but the fates were supposed to have decreed that no Roman general should transgress that limit with impunity. The conquering chief was suddenly carried off, whether by natural disease, by a stroke of lightning, or by the dagger of his lieutenant Aper, who undoubtedly aimed at the succession. Numerian, who was in attendance upon his father, promptly led the legions homeward; but he, too, was quickly cut off, and his death, also, might be attributed to treachery. Meanwhile, another chief of the legions, a Dalmatian of the name of Diocles, a name which he had changed to Diocletianus, as more consonant to Roman dignity, was on the watch for his own advancement. This competitor had risen from the lowest ranks by the sheer force of his talents. He had been early assured by a prophetic Druidess that he was destined for the empire, a prize which could no longer seem beyond the reach of any fortunate officer, or even private soldier, and further that he should attain to it by the slaughter of a boar. For many years did Diocletian addict himself to the chase in the forests of Gaul and Mæsia, nor did he suffer himself to despair of success, however futile the result of his many triumphs over the beasts of the forest. But when at last an opportunity offered of avenging his own chief by the murder of the pretender Aper, he thrust his sword exultingly into the bosom of 'the boar' his rival, and called boldly upon the legions and the Senate to sanction his assumption of the purple. The army of the East adhered staunchly to him. Carinus, at the head of the forces of the West, advanced with courage to the encounter, and displayed high military talents in more than one victorious engagement. But the star of Diocletian was in the ascendant, and when beaten in battle he was unexpectedly delivered from his adversary by the dagger of an

assassin, whose wife Carinus was said to have debauched. Diocletian lived to justify his fortune, and to exhibit not only great talent in the field, but a more just appreciation of the needs of the commonwealth than any of his predecessors ^{A.D. 284.} for many generations. The hour and the man had both arrived for a great revolution in the Roman polity.

CHAPTER LXX.

The epoch of Diocletian—The empire reconstituted on the basis of an Oriental monarchy—The division of the empire with Maximianus, and subdivision with Galerius and Constantius Chlorus—The two Augusti and two Cæsars connected together by family alliances—The empire victorious in every quarter—Diocletian resigns his power and retires to a private station (A.D. 305)—Maximian is induced to follow his example—Interior disturbances during this reign—The insurrection of the Bagaudæ in Gaul—Wretched state of the population—Oppressive taxation—Persecution of the Christians—Diocletian joins in it with reluctance—Constantine stands aloof from it—Failure of the persecution.—(A.D. 284–305.)

THE accession of Diocletian to power marks a new epoch in the history of the Roman empire. From this time the old names of the republic, the consuls, the tribunes, and the Senate itself, cease, even if still existing, to have any political significance. ^{A.D. 284.} The government becomes avowedly a monarchical autocracy, and the officers by whom it is administered are simply the nominees of the despot on the throne. The empire of Rome is henceforth an Oriental sovereignty. Aurelian had already introduced the use of the Oriental diadem. The nobility of the empire derive their positions from the favour of the sovereign; the commons of the empire, who have long lost their political power, cease to enjoy even the name of citizens. The provinces are still administered under the imperial prefects by the magistrates and the assemblies of an earlier date, but the functions of both the one and the other are confined more strictly than ever to matters of police and finance. Hitherto, indeed, the Senate, however intrinsically weak, had found opportunities for putting forth its claims to authority. Though but rarely allowed to exercise its cherished prerogative of election to the supreme power, it was still popularly regarded as the legitimate centre of administration, the fountain of law and social order. There was at least no constituted authority to oppose it. The chosen of the legions had been for some time past the commander of an army, rather than the

sovereign of the state. He had seldom quitted the camp, rarely or never presented himself in the capital. Content with the provision for his own pride and power extorted from the provinces in which he had quartered himself, he had allowed the march of government to proceed in its usual routine; the social fabric continued to be upheld in Italy and throughout its dependencies by the force impressed upon them by the Flavii and the Antonines. But this was the torpor of decrepitude rather than the tranquillity of contentment. The provinces lay at the mercy of the armies on the frontier; and the whole realm might split asunder at any moment into as many kingdoms as there were armies, unless the chiefs of the legions felt themselves controlled by the strength or genius of one more eminent than the rest. We have noticed many local revolts, and others of the kind were no doubt constantly occurring. Gaul, Britain, Africa, and Egypt were more than once the prey of soldiers, who began at last to aim at independent sovereignties. The chief of the strongest camp and largest army, who called himself emperor, found prompter aid in the daggers of assassins than in the swords of his own legionaries; his opponents were generally struck down by their own unruly followers; and it was by fortune rather than by any active principle of cohesion that the frame of government was still held together. The danger of disruption, thus far averted mainly by the awe which the name of Rome inspired, was becoming yearly more imminent, when Diocletian arose to re-establish the organic connexion of the parts, and breathe a new life into the heart of the body politic.

The jealous edict of Gallienus, as we have seen, had forbidden the senators to take service in the army, or to quit the limits of Italy. The degradation of that once illustrious order, which was thus rendered incapable of furnishing a candidate for the diadem, was completed by its indolent acquiescence in this disqualifying ordinance. The nobles of Rome relinquished all interest in affairs which they could no longer aspire to conduct. The emperors, on their part, ceased to regard them as a substantive power in the state; and in constructing his new imperial constitution Diocletian wholly overlooked their existence. Nevertheless, it would seem that he was still haunted by the undying tradition of the majesty of Rome, and he deemed it more fitting to abstain from visiting the city itself than to take up his residence there without paying respect to the Senate, which was still enthroned on its seven hills. While he disregarded the possibility of opposition at Rome, he contrived a new check upon

Map of the
WESTERN EMPIRE
Showing its division into Dioceses
& Provinces

English Miles
0 50 100
Roman Miles
0 100 200



the rivalry of his distant lieutenants, by associating with himself three other chiefs, welded together by strict alliance into one imperial family, each of whom should take up his residence in a separate quarter of the empire, and combine with all the others in maintaining their common interest. His first step was to choose a single colleague in the person of a brave soldier of obscure origin, an Illyrian peasant, by name Maximianus, whom he invested with the title of Augustus, in the year 286. The associated rulers assumed at the same time the fanciful epithets of Jovius and Herculus, auspicious names, which made them perhaps popular in the camps, where the commanding genius of the one and the laborious fortitude of the other were fully recognised. Maximianus was deputed to control the legions in Gaul, to make head against domestic sedition, as well as against the revolt of Carausius, a pretender to the purple in Britain, while Diocletian encountered the enemies or rivals who were now rising up in various quarters in the East. His dangers still multiplied, and again the powers of the state were subdivided to meet them. In the year 292 Diocletian created two Cæsars; the one, Galerius, to act subordinately to himself in the East; the other, Constantius Chlorus, to divide the government of the Western provinces with Maximian. The Cæsars were bound more closely to the Augusti by receiving their daughters in marriage; but though they acknowledged each a superior in his own half of the empire, and admitted a certain supremacy of Diocletian over all, yet each enjoyed kingly rule in his own territories, and each established a court and capital, as well as an army and a camp. Diocletian retained the wealthiest and most tranquil portion of the realm, and reigned in Nicomedia over Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt; while he entrusted to the Cæsar Galerius, established at Sirmium, the more exposed provinces on the Danube. Maximian occupied Italy, the adjacent islands, and Africa, stationing himself, however, not in Rome but at Milan. Constantius was required to defend the Rhenish frontier; and the martial provinces of Gaul, Spain, and Britain were given him to furnish the forces necessary for maintaining that important trust.

The capital of the Western Cæsar was fixed at Trêves. Inspired with a common interest, and controlled by the ascendancy of Diocletian himself, all the emperors acted with vigour in their several provinces. Diocletian recovered Alexandria and quieted the revolt of Egypt. Maximian routed the unruly hordes of Mauretania, and overthrew a pretender to sovereignty in that distant quarter. Con-

stantius discomfited an invading host of Allemanni, kept in check Carausius, who for a moment had seized upon Britain, and again wrested that province from Allectus, who had murdered and succeeded to him. Galerius brought the legions of Illyria to the defence of Syria against the Persians, and though once defeated on the plains of Carrhæ, at last reduced the enemy to submission. Thus victorious in every quarter, Diocletian celebrated the commencement of his twentieth year of power with a triumph at the ancient capital, and again taking leave of the imperial city, returned to his

A.D. 305. customary residence at Nicomedia. The illness with which

he was attacked on his journey suggested or fixed his resolution to relieve himself from his cares, and on May 1, in the year 305, being then fifty-nine years of age, he performed the solemn act of abdication at Morgus, in Mæsia, the spot where he had first assumed the purple at the bidding of his soldiers. Strange to say, he did not renounce the object of his ambition alone. On the same day a similar scene was enacted by his colleague Maximian at Milan; but the abdication of Maximian was not, it is said, a spontaneous sacrifice, but imposed upon him by the influence or authority of his elder and greater colleague. Diocletian had established the principle of succession by which the supreme power was to descend. Having seen the completion of all his arrangements, and congratulated himself on the success, thus far, of his great political experiments, he crowned his career of moderation and self-restraint by strictly confining himself during the remainder of his life to the tranquil enjoyment of a private station. Retiring to the residence he had prepared for himself at Salona, he found occupation and amusement in the cultivation of his garden; and the story was current that when his more restless colleague urged him to resume the honours from which he had disengaged them both, he invited him to admire the vegetables he had himself grown, and learn a lesson of simplicity and contentment.

A new feature of disturbance attracts our notice at this period in the interior of the empire. Insurrections of the slave population had more than once occurred in more than one province; the temporary success with which they had been attended, especially in Sicily, may cause us to wonder that they were not more frequent and more formidable. But in the reign of Diocletian the great territory of Gaul was thrown into a state of anarchy by the violence, not of the slaves, but of the great mass of the free labouring population. It would seem that the system of prædial slavery was at this

time far from general in the provinces. The fields were worked by coloni, who were at least legally free peasants, though the habits of the country and the times bound them for the most part to the soil on which they were born. The political system under which the provinces were administered gave little liberty of movement to the labouring classes. The imperial taxation was administered by the hands of the local authorities, who were bound, town by town, and village by village, to supply the quota imposed upon them by general assessment, and the utmost jealousy was exercised in preventing any contributor from evading the payment of his share by withdrawing himself from the spot on which he was registered. The fiscal machinery of the Romans was to the last most rude and burdensome. Years of famine or pestilence, years of foreign invasion or domestic trouble, threw large communities into the most painful difficulties, for which there was no remedy but the occasional indulgence of a government which was often as needy as the neediest of its subjects. The collection of the annual taxes was a constant struggle; the chief people of each community, who were made responsible for the sum required, were plunged from affluence into penury. It became the incessant effort of the curiales and duumvirs, the councilmen and mayors of the cities, to escape the duties thus imposed upon them, which too commonly involved them in ruin. If they maintained their own position it was only by grinding to the utmost the classes beneath them. The empire generally, under the prevalence of vice, ignorance, and the common curse of slavery, was sinking fast in wealth and in population, while the luxury of its magnates and the necessities of the government were rather increasing than diminishing. The insurrection of the Bagaudæ, or rustic banditti of Gaul, was caused by the excessive distress which had fallen upon the peasantry throughout that country; for Gaul had suffered especially both from the civil dissensions and the barbarian attacks of the last half-century. For several years the whole territory was overrun with troops of famished and furious marauders, who made war upon all property indiscriminately, ravaged the open country almost unresisted, attacked the cities, and in the case of Autun sacked and destroyed one of the greatest centres of Gaulish civilisation. It would seem, however, that the towns were for the most part able to defend themselves behind their fortifications, and the insurrection perhaps spent itself when its fuel was exhausted. It collapsed after a time almost as suddenly as it arose. But the imperial government, though it acquired strength

under the vigorous control of its new chiefs for the suppression of similar revolts, does not seem to have learnt any lesson of fiscal wisdom. The imperial taxation continued to the last to be an increasing drain upon the waning resources of the population.

It is from the Christian writers themselves that we are led to infer that this insurrection was not wholly unconnected with the despair of the persecuted believers. The 'Acts of the Martyrs' claim the Bagaudæ very generally for Christians; but our Pagan records make no allusion to any such connexion, and we should at least suspend our judgment about it. Doubtless the cruelties of Decius and Aurelian might have driven even the most patient of victims to fury and violence; but the faction of the Christians was not at this period strong in Gaul or the Western provinces generally, and less so in the rural districts than in the towns. It is not improbable, however, that the consciousness which this insurrection forced upon the government of the explosive character of the general discontent induced it to look with increasing jealousy upon the political influence which Christianity was beginning to exercise. It was at this time that it made its last and most violent effort to stamp out the new faith altogether. The earlier persecutions, severe as they were, had been for the most part local, irregular, and transient. The rulers of the empire now determined to act on a regular plan from one extremity of their dominions to the other. It was by Maximian in the West, and Galerius in the East, that the project was first conceived. They it was who urged it pertinaciously upon the reluctant Diocletian. It was said by the Christians, and perhaps generally believed, that they at last prevailed upon him only by causing his palace at Nicomedia to be fired by incendiaries, and persuading him that it was the work of sectarian fanatics. Diocletian yielded at last, and signalised himself as more relentless than any persecutor before him. Of the four rulers of the empire Constantius alone refused to join in this barbarous policy, and the Christians in Gaul at least, the country of the Bagaudæ, were suffered to live unmolested.

The disciples of the true faith were doubtless still multiplying. They were continuing more and more to absorb into their body the intelligence, the activity, and the moral force of the empire. Diocletian cannot have been blind to the impossibility of reviving the spirit of heathenism, or raising up a counterpoise to their influence in the strongholds either of superstition or philosophy. Nor can we suppose that he was moved by the alarms prevalent in an earlier

generation, when some of the best and wisest of the heathens believed that the public calamities were caused by the anger of their own affronted divinities. The era of Diocletian, under the sway of an able and victorious leader, promised a revival of general security. The worst might seem to be past. A better day had dawned. New objects were in view, new principles of government were coming into action. The Senate of Rome, the stronghold of old and vain tradition, had ceased to control the march of affairs. Diocletian had no need to submit to its prejudices, or to buy its favour by ignoble concessions. But the object to which he attached paramount importance, and for which he would make any sacrifice, was to establish a uniform system of administration radiating from each centre of sovereignty.

During the last century the government of the empire had become completely decentralised. Each province had provided for itself; each army had drawn its supplies from its own neighbourhood. The authority of the Senate had hardly extended beyond Italy; the power even of the reigning emperor had generally been restricted to the territory in the midst of which his own legions were quartered. Even Decius and Probus, vigorous as they proved themselves in their own camps, might fear to provoke a resistance which they had not leisure to quell, if they tried to enforce their edicts in Gaul or Africa. But when by the multiplication of sovereigns the executive authority was extended once more throughout the empire it became necessary to show that it was no longer a mere shadow. The laws were to be enforced, uniformity to be restored, every province and every subject was to be made to acknowledge the paramount supremacy of the imperial will. Christianity, however innocent in act, had become in its ideas and in its forms a state within the state. Whatever the government might think of its opinions, it could not fail to see a rival in its organisation. Courts and prefects were jealous of metropolitans and bishops. The claims of the Church to concede or withhold a share in the privileges of its membership, which had become connected with the enjoyment of benefices and endowments, might seem to trench upon political prerogatives. Accordingly, having subdued every external enemy and rival, Diocletian turned his attention to the domestic foe, for such he was induced to regard it, who had set up a co-ordinate sovereignty within the limits of his own jurisdiction. He proclaimed internecinal war against the Christian Society, the extent of which he perhaps underrated, the moral power of which he

totally misapprehended. He ventured upon a struggle in which success was impossible, and lived himself to know how decisively he was defeated. He witnessed the cessation of the persecution of the Christians, and dying, as we are informed, eight years after his abdication, just survived to hear of the Edict of Milan, which guaranteed them once for all an established position in the commonwealth.

CHAPTER LXXI.

Division of the empire after Diocletian—Constantine, son of Constantius, saluted emperor by his soldiers—His contest with Maxentius—Battle of the Milvian bridge—Edict of Milan, and toleration of the Christians—Constantine forms an alliance with Licinius—Jealousy between them—Constantine's position towards the Christian Church—Councils at Rome and at Arles—Persecution of the Donatists—The Circumcelliones—Quarrel between Constantine and Licinius—Defeat and death of Licinius—Constantine sole emperor—His increasing favour towards the Christians—He puts to death his son Crispus—Council of Nicæa—Foundation of Constantinople—Constantine's baptism, on his death-bed, and deification by the Pagans.—(A.D. 305–337.)

NOTWITHSTANDING the ability which Diocletian had displayed in the government of the realm, the distribution of power he affected to make on his own abdication seems to indicate caprice and weakness, and was speedily followed, as might have been expected, by fresh disturbances. He had insisted on the retirement of Maximian. Whatever means he may have had of enforcing this sacrifice, he could not fail to irritate his reluctant colleague, and to sow thereby the seeds of future troubles. But he made even a worse blunder than this, for instead of inviting the two Cæsars who remained in power to step into the superior place of Augusti, and associate each with himself a prince of his own choice, he had allowed his son-in-law and favourite Galerius to nominate both the new candidates. Galerius appointed his nephew, Daza, originally an Illyrian shepherd, to be the Cæsar of the East, with the provinces of Egypt and Syria, under the name of Maximinus, or the still grander title of Jovius. At the same time, passing over the manifest claims of Constantine, the son of Constantius, he forced upon the Western Augustus another Cæsar in the person of one Flavius Severus, a favourite perhaps with some of the legions, and to put him at the head of the administration of Italy. Constantius, ruler of the Gaulish provinces, was at the time far distant in Britain, and was moreover reported to be lying sick. Galerius expected his death,

or ventured to overlook him in his absence, and hoped, by calling creatures of his own to the succession, to secure supreme authority over the whole empire for himself. But the moderation of Constantius, which had made him an object of dislike and jealousy to his unscrupulous colleagues, endeared him to his own subjects, and gave him favour in the eyes of the Christian population throughout the provinces. Great multitudes of the new faith had taken refuge under his sway, and had enjoyed his protection. The soldiers admired him for his victories over the Alemanni and the Caledonians; at the moment of his death they proclaimed his son Constantine emperor in their camp at York, and the nomination was received with enthusiasm by all classes throughout the West. Galerius did not venture to oppose this demonstration of feeling. He suffered his new rival, thus irregularly appointed, to exercise authority in the place of his father, but claimed the right, as the eldest and first of the four associated princes, of assigning him only the fourth rank among them, with the subordinate title of Cæsar. Constantine affected to be satisfied, and continued for six years to confine himself to the administration of the Northern provinces. During this period he carried out his father's policy in every particular. He chastised the barbarians in the North of Britain, and put the Roman possessions in the island in a complete state of defence against them. He established the provincial government, which had been overthrown by Carausius, on a secure basis. Thence he flew to the succour of the garrisons on the Rhine, which, on the death of Constantius, had been promptly assailed by fresh incursions of the Germans, and completed the great victory of Noviomagus (Neumagen, on the Moselle) by a terrible massacre of his captives. At the same time towards his subjects he displayed the utmost moderation and clemency, tolerating and protecting the Christians, and remitting the fiscal burdens which had pressed so hard upon the population of Gaul. Though personally indifferent, it would seem, to every form of religion, he was keenly alive to the common superstition of worshipping all rising powers. He had the acuteness to perceive that Christianity, which had survived so many persecutions, was the spiritual power of the future; his ardent imagination was doubtless kindled by the claims it advanced, the claims it actually realised; his vigorous understanding convinced him, that whether its authority were divine or human only, it rested at least on a foundation of moral energy and intelligence, that the Christians were the best husbands and fathers, the most honest

A.D. 306.
— 312.

dealers, perhaps the bravest of soldiers, certainly the most loyal of subjects. Whatever might be the relative numbers of the Christians and the Pagans—and undoubtedly the Christians were in a minority in the East, in a very small minority throughout the West—their effective force for all social ends was indefinitely multiplied by their superior zeal and earnestness, and by the admiration their long sufferings had extorted. Combined against the shattered fragments of a thousand sects the Church might seem all-powerful. While watching his time for raising himself to the highest place in the empire Constantine was perhaps already meditating terms of alliance with the greatest moral influence of the period.

Meanwhile the Senate also, the centre of heathenism, exhibited for a moment fresh signs of vitality. Affecting indignation at the entire postponement of the claims of its late ruler Maximian to those of Galerius, it had taken on itself to confer on his son Maxentius the title of Augustus. Maximian himself, defying the remonstrances of the aged Diocletian, issued from his retirement, and reassumed authority, under pretence of lending the weight of his name and experience to the cause of his son. He gave his daughter Fausta in marriage to Constantine, and thus cemented, as he hoped, an alliance between the ruler of Gaul and the claimant to Italy. But no sooner did Maxentius taste of power than he drove his own father out of his dominions; and Constantine suffered his father-in-law to find an asylum in Gaul only on condition of resigning a second time all share in the imperial government. The later career of this restless adventurer is recorded with some apparent admixture of exaggeration and fiction. He is said to have made divers attempts to regain a splendid position, to have sought in vain to engage Diocletian himself to resume the purple, to have succeeded once more in obtaining favour from Constantine, but to have repaid his indulgence by raising his standard against him in the south of Gaul, while he was occupied with an expedition in the opposite quarter. The enthusiasm of Constantine's soldiers is said to have been displayed in the forced marches they willingly underwent to surprise the traitor at Marseilles, where he was finally

delivered up by his own followers. Again he was pardoned; again he contrived a plot against his benefactor, and a romantic story is told of the attempt he made to assassinate him in the arms of his consort Fausta, and the artifice by which Fausta and Constantine combined to outwit him. Then at last he met with the death which he had merited by so many treacheries.

A.D. 310.

Constantine, indeed, still refrained from laying violent hands upon his own wife's father, but required him to choose his own means of suicide.

The death of Maximian was followed, in the year 311, by that of Galerius, whose loathsome disease was by the Christians ascribed with grim satisfaction to a divine visitation. On his deathbed, indeed, he repealed the edict of persecution which he had extorted from Diocletian, but this tardy reparation did not avail to soften the detestation in which his name continued to be held by the believers whom he had so signally oppressed. Severus had died a few years earlier, and Galerius had supplied his place by appointing to the Illyrian provinces an officer of his own, by birth a Dacian peasant, named Licinius. For a short time the empire was shared by five sovereign princes, but on the decease of Galerius Licinius took possession of the East, and the four rulers, Licinius and Maximin, Constantine and Maxentius, divided the Roman world between them, nor would any one of them surrender the superior title of Augustus. Licinius and Constantine were both able and ambitious, while their two colleagues were haughty, indeed, but indolent. Licinius had the discretion to enter into an alliance with Constantine, but he contrived to leave his new confederate to conduct hostilities against Maxentius alone, while he watched himself from a distance the issue of the contest. Scarcely, indeed, was Galerius dead before the rulers of Gaul and Italy rushed into deadly conflict with one another. Constantine was the prompter and more vigorous. He was the first to cross the Alps, and he gained three brilliant victories in rapid succession, at Turin, at Verona, and lastly at the Milvian bridge, three miles from Rome. Maxentius, routed utterly in this final engagement, was drowned in re-crossing the Tiber, which he had imprudently placed in his rear. Constantine entered Rome towards the end of the year 312. He was received with acclamations, due more to the popular hatred of the late tyrant than to any special admiration for the conqueror. He was acknowledged as chief of the empire by Italy and Africa, as well as by the provinces comprised in his own government. He had already issued from Milan the famous decree which gave the imperial licence to the religion of the Christians, and assured them of his favour as well as his protection. At a later period he announced, confirming his assertion with a solemn oath, that on his march from Gaul he had beheld the vision of a brilliant cross in the heavens, inscribed with the legend,

A.D. 312.

'By this conquer.' Doubtless Constantine was a man of strong imagination, exalted by wonderful successes. It is not necessary to believe that the vision he related was either a miracle or an imposture.

Constantine had little sympathy for the name of Rome or for the Senate which represented it, to both of which he had been through life an entire stranger. Nevertheless, on entering in triumph the ancient home of the Cæsars, he affected to restore the consideration of the illustrious order. He conformed to the traditions of the empire by assuming the place of Chief Pontiff of the old national religion; on the arch of triumph which he erected in the city he placed statues of some of the deities of Olympus, while he enveloped his own personal faith in studied ambiguity by representing his victory to have been gained by the 'inspiration of divinity.' He took vigorous measures to prevent the city from ever again giving laws to the empire by disbanding the prætorian guards, and destroying their fortified camp. With this military institution the imperial power departed finally from Rome, and the seat of government was from henceforth formally established wherever the emperor chose to set up his own permanent residence. Constantine had accepted the proffered alliance of Licinius, had given him his daughter in marriage, and had engaged him to set his seal to the edict of Milan. Galerius had been a fanatic, but his successor was indifferent to all religions, and was easily persuaded to sanction the policy of his confederate, and accept with him the conviction that that form of belief was safest which seemed most successful. The allied sovereigns sought, it is alleged, a further confirmation of their joint power by inviting the old veteran of Salona to express his approval of it by his presence; and when he excused himself on account of his age and infirmities, they accused him of a combination with their rival Maximin, and actually induced him to starve himself through fear. But it is hard to suppose that the countenance of the discrowned recluse could have been worthy of their consideration. Maximin, indeed, was an easy conquest. Licinius undertook alone the charge of overthrowing him. Bearing with him to the East the edict of Milan, and placarding it on the walls of Nicomedia, he carried the
applause and support of the Christian party, and promptly
A.D. 313. broke the power of his adversary in three battles in Thrace and Asia Minor. Maximin fled to Tarsus, and there poisoned himself. Licinius persecuted the friends and family of the vanquished Augustus with exceeding barbarity, which he is said to have ex-

tended even to the widows of Galerius and Diocletian. It may be feared that he sought to recommend himself to the triumphant Christians by these sanguinary reprisals.

Constantine already viewed the successes of Licinius with jealousy. He pretended to discover an intrigue against himself, and suddenly rushed across the Alps with no large force to take him by surprise. A battle ensued on the plains of Mardia in Thrace. The event was undecided, and the rivals came once more to an agreement, by which Licinius surrendered Illyricum, Macedonia, Greece, and part of Mæsia, thus placing the boundary of the Western empire farther eastward than the later and more permanent division. The compact thus effected remained unbroken for nine years, during which Constantine was actively engaged in consolidating the forces of his vast dominions, while his colleague or adversary was losing the respect of his people and the favour which he had recently gained with the Christians. Constantine reorganised his army, breaking up its force into a great number of small divisions, and reducing the strength of the legion to 1,500 men. In order to keep up its numbers he freely admitted slaves into the ranks, which, indeed, had been done frequently before him in cases of emergency. The command of the troops was given for the most part to barbarian captains, who seem almost alone to have possessed courage and conduct. The defence of the frontiers was very generally entrusted to the military colonies established along them, and from this period may be dated the introduction of a kind of feudal tenure into the policy of the empire. Meanwhile Constantine was not less busily employed in revising the civil government. The constitutions he enacted form an important part of the whole body of imperial legislation. His great object was to weld together the Christian and the Pagan population, and place both societies under one equal law. He was sanguine enough to hope that the religious sentiments of all sects might be moulded into harmony with one another; but he was not long in making the discovery that so far from uniting the Christians with the Pagans, it was impossible to bring even the Christians alone into agreement with one another. Hitherto, indeed, no secular ruler had had any experience in dealing with the affairs of the Church. The bishops who bore spiritual rule among the believers persuaded their new patron that his imperial interference might reconcile their differences, and were not slow to invoke it in support of their own authority. Accordingly he convened councils,

first at Rome, and again at Arles, chiefly to settle a question of ecclesiastical discipline relating to the treatment of the weak brethren who had lapsed from the faith in time of persecution. His decisions met with no acceptance from the Donatists, against whom he pronounced, and he was soon driven to enforce them by the arm of power. The first imperial council of the Church was the signal for the first ecclesiastical persecution. At the same time the sedition of the Circumcelliones in Africa, a sect of Christians driven to revolt by poverty as much as fanaticism, embittered his feelings towards all who protested against his spiritual jurisdiction. While, however, we are constrained to admit that under the auspices of Constantine intolerance became the first fruit of toleration, we may remark with satisfaction the purer and milder principles of this emperor's civil legislation. While himself as yet but half-persuaded to be a Christian he recognised the higher morality and stricter equity of Christian principles, particularly in relation to the law of marriage and the law of slavery. The year 321 is marked by two special concessions to the feelings of the believers. All secular labour and civil action, *except the emancipation of a slave*, is forbidden on the 'day of the Sun,' and Christian soldiers are allowed to quit their ranks on that day and assist at the divine service of their religion. Nevertheless, while the principles of the Christians were thus respected, their churches protected, and their endowments secured to them, Constantine took no violent steps to break with the existing forms of Paganism. He was still Chief Pontiff of Jupiter 'Best and Greatest.' He still suffered the god of the Romans to be invoked in the camps as well as in his accustomed temples. He did not forbid vows to be made and prayers addressed to the genius of the emperor. He looked forward to be himself enrolled after death among the blessed objects of the national cult. He combined in his own mind the two hostile faiths rather than balanced them one against another—a state of feeling rather than of opinion, which is more common, perhaps, than is generally supposed.

While his susceptible imagination was in this state of fusion, his rival Licinius, whose conscience was doubtless of much coarser texture, was vibrating furiously from one side to the other. He watched the career of the Western emperor with jealousy, for he knew that a final struggle between them was inevitable, and both in fact were secretly preparing for it. But while Constantine strove at least to combine the nations under his sway with common views and in-

terests, his rival seems to have perversely taken the opposite course. He was irritated at the favour with which the Christians continued to regard their original benefactor, and believed that they could be only hostile to himself. By degrees he withdrew from them many of the guarantees of protection and toleration afforded by the edict of Milan, and insulted their prejudices even where he abstained from injuring their persons. When at last open war broke out between the East and West he avowed himself an uncompromising adherent of the Pagan divinities, and solemnly placed himself and his armies under their protection. The contest between Constantine and Licinius became the contest of the new faith with the old. Every advantage, except numbers, was on the side of the former. The struggle commenced and ended in the year 323. From Greece, where he had collected his forces, the Christian ^{A.D. 323.} chief advanced, with the labarum or monogram of Christ displayed upon his standard, leading 130,000 men against the 165,000 of his adversary, who went into battle with a train of aruspices and diviners. The armies met at Adrianople, Constantine giving for the word, 'God our Saviour,' Licinius bidding his soldiers recollect that the gods of the Pagans were many against only one. It was the first time that the two principles of faith, the monotheist and the polytheist, met in combat. The result was decisive. Licinius was routed and driven to take refuge in the fortress of Byzantium. From this place he was speedily dislodged by the fleet of Constantine, which was conducted by his son Crispus. The Eastern emperor tried to strengthen himself by sharing his power with an officer named Martinianus. But this man could bring him no effectual assistance. He made front, indeed, against his adversary at Chalcedon; but was once more put to flight. From Nicomedia, his capital, he made entire submission to the conqueror, who indulged him with the assurance of his personal safety, while he sternly required the cession of his share of the empire. Martinianus was put to death without delay, and the life of Licinius himself, for which, perhaps, his consort Constantia had interceded, was required after a brief interval. Then first could Constantine feel secure in the undivided sovereignty of the whole Roman world.

The historians remark from this epoch the increasing favour of Constantine towards the Christians, and more and more harshness in his treatment of their opponents. But with the satisfaction of his most ambitious views the character of the conquering emperor undoubtedly degenerated. The title of 'Great,' which has been

affixed to this successful adventurer, along with only two other conspicuous names of ancient history, refers, perhaps, more particularly to the Eastern conquests in which he rivalled Alexander and Pompeius. But his flatterers may have declared without blushing that both as a statesman and a warrior his exploits transcended those of either the one or the other. He had succeeded in the field against more formidable enemies than either; he had obtained by his own prowess a wider empire; but his recognition of the claims of Christianity, viewed as a politic measure only, was a greater triumph over the general littleness of his age than has fallen to the lot of any other national hero to achieve. But there is much to be said to derogate from the unbounded admiration with which his Christian panegyrists only too naturally regarded their protector. From the East he brought back, as so many Roman captains had done before him, a strong bias towards the forms and ideas of Oriental sovereignty. He reconstituted the empire in prefectures or satrapies after the fashion of a Persian or an Assyrian. His palace became the focus of family intrigues and jealousies; the cruel precautions of a Tiberius or a Nero were revived, perhaps even exceeded, in the domestic privacy of the first Christian emperor. Dissension raged between his mother Helena and Fausta his consort. His brothers were forbidden to assume any place in public life, and kept sedulously out of sight of the people. His eldest son, Crispus, a soldier of some promise, the child of a deceased favourite, became an object of jealousy to the mother of his youngest but legitimate offspring. Such, at least, is the most probable way of accounting for his sudden execution by his father's order, though the

A.D. 324. death of Fausta, which promptly followed, gave occasion to the rumour of an incestuous connection discovered and thus cruelly punished. But the apologists of Constantine succeeded in casting a veil over the transaction, and this has, perhaps, deepened the cloud which hangs over his character in consequence.

Constantine seems to have studiously avoided making Rome his residence; he had roamed from city to city, fixing his court most commonly in Gaul, at Trèves or Lyons; nevertheless, it was at Rome that he celebrated the Vicennalia, or twentieth anniversary of his accession, and from Rome apparently that Crispus was sent to the prison in which he perished. From the date of that tragedy he is said to have been never free from gloomy remorse, and the Pagans believed that the increasing fervour of his devotion to the rival faith was prompted by the absolution offered him by its

ministers, which the hierophants of the mysteries had refused. Again he assumed the hopeless task of effecting unity of belief among the Christians themselves. The bishops, notwithstanding his recent failures, still flattered him with the idea that he could compose the differences of the Church on the most recondite subject of human speculation, the nature of the Deity. In the year ^{A.D. 325.} 325 the chief of the Roman people, who was still chief priest of the Roman religion, assembled a large number of their order in council at Nicæa. He took his place among them in person, attended by soldiers and officers of state, to receive their testimony to the faith as it had been delivered to each in his respective diocese, and to pronounce judgment accordingly. Such was the crowning result of three centuries of contest between the Church and the Empire. Augustus restored the temples of the Olympian divinities and based his empire upon a Pagan revival. Constantine accepted the dogmas of the Christian faith, and expounded them from the throne to the bishops and the people. This was, indeed, the commencement of a new order of things in many ways. The union between Church and State thus inaugurated was destined, under whatever modifications, to be essential to all Christian government, and to endure even to the present day. The form of secular administration as settled by Constantine, adopted by him from his predecessor Diocletian, involved hardly a less revolution of political ideas, but in some of its main features it was merely transient. Constantine reunited the whole empire together under his own sceptre; but he divided it again into several portions for his own children; it soon became separated into the two great divisions of the East and the West, the latter of which underwent many mutations, and has only ceased to exist nominally almost in our day; the former enjoyed a continuous existence of nearly eleven centuries; the foundation of its capital stands almost exactly midway between the origin of Rome and the dissolution of the Greek or Eastern empire.

Of all the acts of this illustrious reign there is none that makes so great an impression on our imagination as the foundation of Constantinople. Without ascribing to its founder any special disgust for Rome, as the seat of the Senate and the centre of the ancient religion, or as the scene of the intrigues which resulted in the death of Crispus, we may easily suppose that Constantine recognised the political importance of placing his own throne in nearer proximity to the eastern frontier of the empire. For many hundreds of years,

indeed, the Roman statesmen had constantly looked eastward. The wealth, the intelligence, the ruling ideas of the Roman world had always centered in the eastern provinces. From the time of Sulla and Pompeius the chiefs of the Roman armies had come back to Rome with their minds debauched by the pomp which they had witnessed and enjoyed beyond the Hellespont. Antonius and Cæsar had been suspected of a design to make themselves Oriental despots. The goddess Juno had been specially invoked by the popular poet to dissuade Augustus from founding a new Ilium. In later times the increasing power and ambition of the revived monarchy of Persia had become a more urgent reason for looking eastward. The lines of the Rhine and the Danube it was hoped to secure by introducing many hordes of barbarians into the provinces behind them; but there were no such specious means of protection for the line of the Euphrates. Diocletian had chosen the East as the division of the empire most worthy of his own superior presence. In this, as in other things, Constantine followed the policy of the real restorer of the Roman authority. But his eyes had been fixed upon Byzantium, at the southern mouth of the Bosphorus, by the accident of Licinius taking refuge there, from whence it required a fleet from Greece to dislodge him. Admirable for defence, the situation was not less admirable as an administrative centre. To this spot he removed the imperial residence from its neighbour Nicomedia, far inferior to it in all these advantages. He marked out in person the space to be included in the walls, strenuously advancing, to the amazement of his courtiers, who had fallen far short of the measure of his prescient ambition. He proceeded to fill this space, not inferior to the area of Rome itself, with a new city, requiring the nobles of the empire to erect palaces for their families, and creating for it a new Senate and hierarchy of officers after the model of the ancient capital. The city and Senate of Rome remained as before, while those of Constantinople were endued with coordinate honour and authority, and enjoyed, moreover, all the advantages of the imperial presence. Two capitals could not, indeed, exist on equal terms within the same sphere. Rome

A.D. 330. sank immediately into a provincial metropolis, such as Alexandria, Antioch, or Trèves; Constantinople became the mistress of the world, and succeeded to Rome's proudest title in the popular designation of 'The City.'

The reign of Constantine lasted to the year 337, untroubled by civil dissensions, and prosperous in the conduct of affairs on every

frontier of the empire. The historians commemorate the settlement of the finances on a new basis, which rendered them more elastic, and gave perhaps considerable relief to the reviving industry of the general population. The interior, at least, of the provinces remained undisturbed by war. Letters revived; humanity extended her conquests. The character, indeed, of this emperor, equally unfortunate in the interested panegyrics of the Christians and the unscrupulous detraction of the Pagans, must ever remain a problem for psychologists, to be attempted only by those who have had experience of the mental struggles of an age of transition in spiritual belief. On his deathbed, and not till then, did the first Christian emperor solicit the gift of Christian baptism, and this he sought, no doubt, rather as a passport for the next world than as a means of grace in this. But even the Pagans would not wholly surrender him, nor did his successors, though Christians themselves, refuse to allow him the honours of the Pagan apotheosis.

CHAPTER LXXII.

Constantinople becomes the real capital of the empire—Contrast between the moral influence of the old and the new city—Constantinople the centre of law and of military government—Division of the empire between the three sons of Constantine the Great—Fall of Constantine and Constans; Constantius becomes sole emperor—View of Paganism and of Christianity at Rome—Visit of Constantius—He requires the Pope Liberius to condemn Athanasius—On his refusal he thrusts Felix into the Roman see—Resentment and violence of the Christians, and cession of Felix—Council of Ariminum—Death of Constantius.—(A.D. 337–361.)

THE foundation of Constantinople removed the centre of empire to the East. The imperial ruler took up his residence in the new capital, where the machinery of imperial administration followed him. Many noble and opulent families migrated from the Tiber to the Bosphorus, and together with them a large portion of the horde of tradesmen and artificers who cater for the wants of wealth and fashion. Rome speedily became to her new rival as Moscow to St. Petersburg, as Turin recently to Florence, and again to modern Rome. The people of the East were not unfamiliar with the process of creating capitals. Both Antioch and Alexandria were cities which had sprung, as it were, in one day into imperial residences, while Tyre and Ephesus and Smyrna had been the ripe growth of centuries. When Constantine's edict appeared that a new Rome should rise upon the site

of the provincial colony of Byzantium, multitudes of every rank and order were ready to anticipate his commands, and flock of their own accord to the spot on which the sun of imperial favour might be expected to shine most brightly.

But the transfer of the seat of empire to the East was effected by something more than the capricious edict of the sovereign. The progress of civilisation had been long tending in this direction, and could no longer be restrained. It was only by doing moral violence to the sentiments of mankind in general that the government of the civilised world had been so long retained at a spot so remote from the centre of ideas as Rome ever had been and still continued to be. The population of the Eastern provinces far exceeded that of the Western in mere numbers. In general activity of mind and intellectual culture their superiority was even more marked. The East was still the home of Hellenic ideas, which penetrated the various zones of cultivation beyond it, and reached Rome and Italy among the last and most distant. From the East, and primarily from Greece, had come the modifications of the Roman law, which had expanded the local institutions of a Latin city into a system of universal jurisprudence; from the East, and notably from Athens, had flowed the various ethical speculations which had modified the rude and narrow traditions of Sabine and Etruscan life; the philosophy of Greece, itself a combination of many Eastern theories, had been presented to the Romans by Varro, Cicero, and Seneca; the theosophies of the East had penetrated chiefly through Alexandria into Italy, but had hardly succeeded in making any impression upon the minds of the wearied Italians. Lastly, Christianity had been introduced to the capital of the empire from the East, and recommended, first, by the favour in which for a brief period the ideas of Palestine had been held there, but more strongly and more permanently by the influence of the Greek residents in the city, who had preached it through the medium of the Greek language, and the ministrations for the most part of a Greek priesthood. Through the first three centuries the bishops of Rome seem to have been mostly of Hellenic extraction; the writers of the Church were Greeks, Africans, and Gauls, some of whom wrote indeed in Latin, but none perhaps were of Roman or even Italian origin. The intellectual movements of mankind throughout the course of our history had been almost wholly Greek or Oriental.

Against the force of this movement, thus extraneous to herself, Rome had maintained her hold upon the imagination of her people

by the military power which she wielded from her central position. The city of the Cæsars had been for ages the centre of gravity of her military system. If the frontier of the Euphrates or the Cataracts of the Nile had been actually more remote than the Rhine, or even the Wall of Hadrian, the greater part of her Eastern provinces were more tranquil and more easily governed than those of the West, and her external enemies in the East had been less formidable than those in the opposite quarter. But the rise of the Sassanian monarchy of Persia had increased her perils in that direction; still more the repeated incursions of the Goths across the lower Danube had demanded her constant vigilance, and filled her with unceasing alarm. The position of Constantinople, secure in her command of the sea and of the resources of three continents, constituted a well-placed bulwark against both the Goths and the Persians. The new capital was enabled to maintain itself equally against assailants from all quarters. Though standing almost in sight of the eminences of the Hæmus or Balkan, which the Goths and Scythians have so often scaled, it has never been forced by either. The Goths, indeed, as we shall presently see, were deterred even from making an attempt upon it, and it served to divert the streams of their invasion from itself to Italy and Rome. Constantinople, in fact, secured herself, in the urgency of the crisis now impending, by the sacrifice of her elder sister.

When, indeed, Rome ceased to be the undisputed capital of the whole empire, her fall was deep and rapid. She ceased to be mistress even of the West, and sank, politically at least, into the rank of a mere provincial city. The division of the realm among the three sons of Constantine on the death of their father left her with no resident emperor. Constantine had celebrated, in the year 336, the thirtieth year of his power, a term of rule which had far exceeded that of any Roman sovereign since the era of Augustus. He was leading his forces against the Persian Sapor in the year following, but was cut off by death at Nicomedia, having appointed the division of his possessions among his three sons, Constantine, Constans, and Constantius. The army not only ratified this disposition of the empire, but sealed it by the murder of every other descendant of Chlorus who could interfere with the succession, with the exception only of Gallus and Julianus, the youthful sons of a younger brother of the great Constantine. Of the three co-partners Constantine, the eldest of the brothers, governed the great western provinces, and probably seated himself at Trèves, or some other of the

Gaulish cities. Constans, the youngest, occupied Italy, Illyricum, and Africa; but he seems to have established himself in one of the strongholds of the Pannonian legions, and never to have visited Italy at all. Constantius was entrusted with the larger and more important portion of the empire. His capital was Constantinople, and his first business was to prosecute the war for the defence of the East against the impending invasion of the Persians. This contest was, indeed, carried on throughout the whole reign of Constantius, a period of more than forty years, with partial and alternate success, and the forces of the Eastern emperor were no doubted materially crippled by it. The other brothers were soon involved in a bloody quarrel one with another. Constantine seems to have been the first to provoke it by demanding from Constans the cession of Italy. The contest was

A.D. 340. quickly decided in a battle at Aquileia, in which Constantine perished. Constans became master of the entire West, and seems to have taken up his residence in Gaul, where he led a life of indolence and dissipation, till he was surprised by a mutiny of his soldiers and dispatched by their leader

A.D. 350. Magnentius. Thereupon the victorious upstart assumed the purple, and was acknowledged by the Western provinces; but the legions in Illyricum refused to acknowledge him, and declared that they would have none but an officer of their own, named Vetranio, for their emperor. Constantius, who was now ambitious of re-uniting the whole of his father's empire under the last survivor of his offspring, had to play the part of Severus before him, and amuse one of his rivals while he destroyed the other. But Severus had found himself in the centre of the empire between the positions of Albinus and Niger; Constantius, on the contrary, was engaged in the Persian war at its furthest extremity. It was at Edessa that he first heard of the double revolt which he had to encounter, and his enemies had every opportunity of conferring and joining together against him. Though not endowed with the great qualities of his illustrious predecessor, he was both pertinacious and active, as well as a consummate master of craft. A fortunate turn of military affairs relieved him from immediate apprehension from Persia; he marched his troops across Asia Minor, and through his capital, nor did he pause till he confronted Vetranio on the high road to Sirmium. He had persistently refused to negotiate terms with Magnentius. With his other rival, an aged veteran of very simple character, he condescended to confer; but on feeling the pulse of the soldiers of both camps he was emboldened to declare that the sceptre

must not depart from the house of the great Constantine, and Vetranio himself as well as his soldiers was touched by a feeling of remorseful loyalty. He descended from his throne and threw himself at the feet of the legitimate emperor, who spared and pardoned him. This reconciliation was followed by a decisive battle with Magnentius. The slaughter of the day of Mursa in Pannonia was reputed one of the bloodiest in all Roman history. The usurper was utterly routed. He fled to Aquileia, and from this refuge chastised a revolt in Rome by a cruel proscription. Driven from thence, he made his escape into Gaul, but was there again attacked, and finally destroyed. Constantius became undisputed ruler of the united empire. Yet he did not perhaps deem himself secure till he had got rid of his cousin Gallus, whom he ^{A.D. 353.} had appointed to high command in the East, and in whom he might still apprehend a rival. Gallus seems, indeed, to have conciliated the favour of no party in the empire, and when he justly ^{A.D. 354.} provoked the anger of Constantius by the murder of one of the emperor's officers, the revolt which he attempted met with no support. He was quickly put to death. One more scion of the Flavian house yet remained.

The period of thirty years had now elapsed since Constantine quitted Rome. A generation of Romans had sprung up who had never seen an emperor, nor had witnessed a repetition of the military pageants with which their fathers had been so familiar. The Roman Senate, indeed, had met from day to day in undiminished numbers, but it had not exercised itself upon affairs of state. Its consuls had been annually appointed, as usual, by the direct nomination of the emperor; they gave their names to the year, as in the ancient times, but their office was merely honorary. No prætor or governor of the provinces had gone forth from the imperial city on their ever-recurring missions; for the administration of the empire had been put on a new footing, every officer receiving his appointment direct from the court at Constantinople or Trèves or Milan. Nevertheless Rome had become more and more the resort of the wealthiest and the idlest of the ancient aristocracy. It was still the most eminent centre of luxury and display; it still gave shelter and support to letters and science, and was the storehouse of long accumulated treasures of art, in which the noblest products of Greek and Oriental taste had been collected by centuries of rapine and also of more honourable acquisition. While the armies of the empire were marching to and fro along the highways on all

sides of the ancient city, but never glancing upon her, and while all the operations of the imperial government were set in motion at a distance around her, Rome herself enjoyed unruffled calm. From the time of Diocletian she had no cause to apprehend the affront of a foreign attack. Once only had her peace been broken by the approach of an armed force in a moment of civil discord, and at the battle of the Milvian bridge that danger had been averted. The imperial government had been mild and equitable, and the caprices of the tyrant had never fallen upon the spot from which he had so sedulously dissociated himself. With the cessation of the Diocletian persecution, and the edict of toleration which followed it, the partisans of hostile opinion had been allowed to dwell together at least in substantial harmony. All tongues were loosened, and Christians and Pagans proclaimed their contending views loudly and sometimes angrily, yet the peace was not broken between them; nor, during the period which had just elapsed, had either persuasion real cause to complain of injustice from the ruling power. At Rome, at least with the transient exception just noticed, the fifty years which followed upon the edict of Milan constituted a period of general serenity which may compare, perhaps not disadvantageously; even with the celebrated era of the Antonines.

Conscious as he was of the blessings he actually enjoyed under the system of Constantine and his successors, the Roman indulged himself in a pride for which perhaps his pretensions were less legitimate. He was really passed by in the race of life, but he flattered himself that he was raised above it. He accepted the idle pomp with which he was suffered to invest himself as the homage of the nations who worked for him, who fed him, but who really ruled him. His faith in his own greatness, and in the greatness of the eternal and imperial city of which he was a portion, suffered certainly no abatement. Nor did he refuse to ascribe the glories of which he boasted to the same efficient cause as his ancestors had long before signalled. From the earliest ages it had been said by the Romans of themselves, and by foreigners of the Romans, that they owed their country's triumphs to the reverence in which they held the gods of their country. Their belief in the national divinities had been often shaken; at times it had seemed to perish altogether, or had been transferred to alien objects; but their reverence for them, as far, at least, as it was evinced by their incessant services and sacrifices, had undergone little outward abatement. At this period it may be said that the actual belief of

the Romans centred in an abstract idea of the divinity of their own city. They worshipped the goddess Roma along with many other pretended deities; but they believed in Rome in a sense in which they had no belief in Apollo or Venus or Saturnus or Jupiter. They regarded Rome as the soul, so to speak, of the world; as the principle of life which animates creation; the destruction of the city, the death of Rome, would be, in their imagination, the end of all things. And with Rome, as thus conceived, they bound up the idea of her empire, her religion, and the whole Providential system on which the world around her was organised. Rome in their view was necessary to the empire; the empire was necessary to the universe.

The temple of Rome and Venus, erected by Hadrian, was the most magnificent edifice of the kind in the city. Doubtless the goddess Roma was there represented in a concrete form by an image of metal or marble. But the abstract idea of the divinity of the Empire was more directly realised in the presence of the emperor himself. For many generations the Romans had been familiarised with the deification of their rulers after death; but the sanctity of the imperial person was brought more vividly before them by the vows which they were taught to address in his sacred name, and the sacrifices with which they were accompanied. Even the absence of the emperor at Constantinople or in the provinces might facilitate this delusion. The Orientals acknowledged the deity of their rulers without hesitation, and it was easier for the proud Roman to accept the faith of the world around him than to discover a faith for himself. Whatever might be the notion of the emperor held by the Christians, the Pagans throughout the earth, and generally throughout the empire, certainly attached a peculiar sanctity to the person of their Augustus, and the emperor himself, Christian though he might profess himself, was not loth to accept their devotion. A curious glimpse of the light in which he regarded himself is given in the account of the entry of Constantius into Rome.

The execution of Gallus had just taken place when Constantius paid a triumphal visit to his ancient capital. It would seem that he had never been there before. He is said to have looked with admiring interest upon all the wonders of the great city, and a list is given us of the chief works of architectural splendour which met his vision. Splendid as were the temples and forums and palaces on which he gazed, he could show the citizens a splendour hardly less dazzling in the martial equipage with which he was surrounded,

the long lines of mailed cavalry, and the streaming banners which were carried in military pomp before him. But the figure of the emperor himself attracted of course most attention. The person of Constantius was small and perhaps mean, but he was well got up for effect, painted and bedizened as an object of Eastern hero-worship, such as Ninus or Semiramis, or the Lama of Thibet, or the Mikado of Japan. He never allowed himself to glance to the right or to the left; his curiosity had been brought under perfect control. Standing immovable in his chariot, he yielded to no jolt of the wheels, he *never spat*, he never wiped his mouth nor rubbed his nose, never shifted a hand or finger. Only when passing under some lofty arch or portal he was seen to bow his head slightly, as if he were wont to esteem himself something more elevated than human. It was remarked, indeed, as a sign of the unapproachable superiority which he affected, that throughout his reign he never suffered any one to sit beside him in his vehicle, nor associated with himself in the consulship one who was not a member of the imperial family. Such was the 'idol' whom the East now recommended to the worship of the Romans.

The strange personage who has been thus described to us professed himself a Christian, like his father Constantine. But Christianity, especially in the East, had been divided by the controversy respecting the nature of the Deity, which had been only apparently decided by the Council of Nicæa. The heretic Arius, who had been condemned at Nicæa, succeeded at a later period in gaining an ascendancy over Constantine, and his triumph seemed assured, together with the fall of his rival Athanasius, when he was cut off by a sudden and mysterious death. The tenets of his sect, which placed the Second Person of the Trinity in a lower scale of divinity than the First, seem to have been embraced by many as a compromise with Polytheism, and effected perhaps for a time a hollow truce between the Heathens and the Christians. Constantius himself accepted them without scruple. He deposed Athanasius from the see of Alexandria, and proscribed the orthodox party throughout the empire. On the occasion of his visit to Rome he required Liberius, the bishop of the metropolitan see of the West, to join in this condemnation. We now learn how high a position the bishop or pope of Rome had acquired. The emperors, as we have seen, had withdrawn altogether from their Western capital. The consuls and other chief officers of the ancient commonwealth had lost all estimation and almost all authority since they had

become the direct nominees of an absent sovereign. The nobles and opulent citizens, still generally Pagans, had sunk for the most part into luxurious indolence. Though few comparatively in number, and chiefly of recent and undistinguished origin, the Christians were the most active and intelligent of any party in the city; they held closely together; they were not insensible to the glorious future that was opening to them; and they had the discretion and the energy to make the best of their opportunities, and secure all the ground they gained daily. The edict of Constantine, though it had not given them the temples or the estates of the Heathen priesthoods, had granted them power to erect churches, and to possess themselves of property, and these privileges they exercised to the utmost. Their leaders, inspired with the genuine instinct of the Roman people, took little interest in the philosophical disputes which were agitated with intense fervour in the East; they left it, indeed, to the Latin Christians of Africa or Gaul to distinguish themselves in literature; but the popes of Rome devoted themselves to questions of law and discipline; and it was by them that, even in the fourth century, the foundation of the ecclesiastical system of the Middle Ages was laid almost in silence. The Popes refrained from putting themselves in collision with the great Patriarchs of the East, with whom they were not strong enough to cope; but they fixed themselves firmly in the veneration and affection of the Western hierarchy, and seem, almost with a prescience of the great career before them, to keep ever quietly on the watch for any advantage that might befall them.

Athanasius, driven from the East, had taken refuge with the pope of Rome. So little intercourse was there between the Greeks and the Latins at this time, that the champion of their common faith was obliged to devote three years to the acquisition of the Latin tongue before he could appeal to the sympathies of the Roman church in a language to which it cared to listen. But when his eloquence had acquired full scope it was not long in creating its due effect. Liberius, the pope, had once acquiesced in his excommunication. He now received him with open arms, and defied the eunuch Eusebius, whom Constantius had sent to overawe him. The emperor had summoned him to Milan, and to the emperor he had held the same unbending language. He had been banished into Thrace. During his absence Constantius thrust a rival bishop into his see. The people of Rome deeply resented both the indignity to themselves and the irregularity of the appointment.

Felix, the intruder, was an Arian. The Church of Rome was at once confirmed in its orthodoxy. The Christians refused to enter their accustomed basilicas. The women, more impetuous than the men, came in long procession, like the Roman matrons of old, to remonstrate with the heretical tyrant. Constantius tried to compromise, by declaring that Liberius and Felix should both be bishops of Rome conjointly. He delivered his decree before the assembled citizens in the Circus. 'Shall we have factions in the Church as we have in the Circus?' exclaimed the indignant multitude. 'One God, one Christ, one Bishop!' was the universal cry among them.

Meanwhile, however, the spirit of Liberius had been broken by the hardships of his distant banishment. He professed himself willing to make concessions to the imperial mandate. He was allowed to return to Rome, and it was hoped that the rival prelates might effect a compromise. But the people would allow of no such double sovereignty. When Felix attempted to perform episcopal functions in public they broke out into open riot. The streets and the baths were deluged with blood. The factions of Marius and Sulla were renewed for the sake not of men but of principles. It was a contest not of rival imperators but of conflicting ideas. Eventually Felix fled. Liberius resumed his throne. The remainder of his career, in which he was left undisturbed by the emperor, was uneventful, and he prudently abstained from presenting himself at the council which Constantius held at Ariminum, by
A.D. 361. which the Arian heresy was formally sanctioned, with some specious qualifications, and made for a time predominant. The Council of Ariminum sate in the year 359. Constantius himself died in 361.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

Childhood and youth of Julian—He succeeds to the purple on the death of Constantius—His apostasy from the Christian faith, and attempt to revive the Pagan worship—His campaign against the Persians; his victory and death, A.D. 363—The progress of the Church under Constantine and his successors—The rival faiths placed on a footing of equality—Conversions to Christianity, and special hindrances to the spread of the true religion—Julian's attempts to overthrow it by argument and ridicule—He closes the schools against its disciples—Frustration of his attempt to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem—His efforts to animate Paganism with a spirit of morality derided by the Pagans themselves—Christianity advances, Paganism declines.

It has been said that the position of the sons of Constantine was at the outset secured by the massacre of several other members of his family, and that Gallus and Julianus, the sons of his brother Constantius, were alone suffered to live. These children were, indeed, carefully educated, and bred in the Christian religion; but they were removed from the court and long kept in close confinement. Gallus, who was the elder, was the first to be released from this state of degradation, and was appointed Cæsar by Constantius in the year 351, when he received also the nominal command of the armies in the East. His fall, which soon followed, has been already mentioned. Julianus still survived, and he too experienced his turn of favour. He had been educated at Milan, and afterwards at Athens, where he devoted himself to the study of the ancient philosophy, and imbibed a sincere admiration for the learning and the creeds of Pagan antiquity. Through the favour of the Empress Eusebia he was advanced to the rank of Cæsar, and invested in 355 with the government of Gaul, which was suffering from the incursions of the Allemanni. Though untrained in civil or military affairs his conduct in this position was prudent and successful. He restored tranquillity to the provinces, chastised the invaders, restored the strongholds on the Rhenish frontier, and making Lutetia, the modern Paris, his capital, enlarged and beautified that city, and laid the foundations of its future eminence. Constantius became jealous of his reputation, and required him to despatch four of his legions to the Persian frontier. The soldiers refused to be detached from the command of their favourite captain, and insisted, it is said,

with actual violence on his assuming the purple and raising his standard against the legitimate emperor. Constantius was at Antioch, where he was about to take the field against his enemies in the East. Julian penetrated the south of Germany, advancing in a direct line to the Danube and towards Constantinople. He was already received with acclamations in the Eastern capital before the emperor had become aware of his approach. But Constantius, though still in middle age, was worn out by cares and labours, and died in Cilicia, on his way to confront his rival. Julian was accepted in every quarter as his successor.

A.D. 361.

Julian had never set foot in Rome. He now crossed the Bosphorus, nor did he again visit Europe. His brief but eventful career of empire belongs entirely to Eastern history, and must not long detain us. He repaired at once to Antioch, and occupied himself in preparing for the invasion of Persia. There he cultivated the intimacy of the Pagan men of letters, and especially of the Sophist Libanius, the most consummate rhetorician of the schools. He quickly threw off the profession of Christianity, which he had for some time worn but loosely. The people of Antioch, though vain and frivolous in their life and habits, were, it seems, nominally Christians, and resented his apostasy, which was rendered still more unpalatable to them by his affectation of austere and even cynical manners. Julian appeared among them as a Pagan puritan, who pretended to revive the creed of antiquity by resorting to the practice of severe self-denial. He professed, indeed, to combine the ideas of the highest philosophy with the rites and ceremonies of the most vulgar idolatry. His inward belief might be the sage theosophy of Plato or Zeno, but he exacted and in his own person exercised the devotions and sacrifices which were required of the blindest votaries of Jupiter and Apollo. Wherever he went the country was ransacked for victims. Once more the epigram was current which had applied long before to the ceremonial revival of M. Aurelius, and before him to that of Augustus, in which the cattle were made to exclaim, 'Long life to Cæsar! but if he lives it is we that must perish!' The expedition which Julian led against the Persians was a brilliant advance. He floated with a vast armament down the Euphrates to Circesium, crossed over from thence to Ctesiphon with a powerful army, and awaited the arrival of aid from Armenia to besiege that capital. Disappointed of these succours, he nevertheless penetrated into the interior of Persia; but he was betrayed by the natives of whom he had taken counsel; and

Sapor, adopting the tactics of the Parthians before him, refused to commit himself to a general engagement. At last, when the advancing host were now almost exhausted, the Persian forces assailed them in the rear, and Julian, whose constancy and valour had been remarkable throughout, was himself slain in the pursuit of the enemy whom he had already vigorously repulsed. The Roman army escaped under the command of Jovian, an officer whom they had chosen for their emperor on the field of battle. But they could claim no victory, nor would their new leader A.D. 363. have sacrificed the cattle in thanksgiving, for Jovian was a Christian. The imperial apostasy had triumphed for two years only, and, as every Christian held, had been signally punished.

The history of Rome has now become little else than the history of the progress of Christianity. To this progress the apostasy of Julian gave, indeed, a transient check; but it was succeeded by an era of more vigorous advance than ever. The religious policy of Constantine had been marked by singular, perhaps unexampled moderation. The enthusiasm of the chief who led a small minority of his subjects to combat against overwhelming numbers for the sake of a religious idea, and who acknowledged that his triumph was achieved through the power of the religious principles he invoked, was certainly genuine. The edict by which he established the toleration of Christianity, and placed it on an equality with the ancient beliefs of his countrymen, was assuredly not the measure of a man who was himself indifferent to all creeds. Nor did Constantine hesitate to avow himself a believer in Christ, and to accept as such, though with every profession of personal humility, the place of protector or patron of the faith. Yet he refrained scrupulously from putting himself in a position of hostility to Paganism. He neither closed nor overthrew the temples of their idols. He sanctioned no spoliation of their property. While he favoured the Christians, and attached them by preference to his own person, he did not exclude their opponents from the public service. He refrained even from cutting himself off from Pagan communion, still allowing his name to be associated on his coins with the customary Pagan symbols (even the labarum which figures on his medals is placed in the hands of a Pagan Victory), still occupying the post of Sovereign Pontiff of the old Roman religion; it was not till the crisis of his last sickness that he suffered the rite of baptism to be administered to him, and thus prepared himself for death by the express assumption of communion with the Church.

The Senate of Rome, which remained for the most part unshaken in its fidelity to the old religion, refused to the last to regard him as altogether an apostate, and enrolled him, with the sanction, no doubt, of his Christian successors, among the divinities of Olympus. Constantine, the first Christian emperor, was declared a god, like Cæsar the atheist and Aurelius the philosopher before him.

Doubtless Constantine was politic as well as zealous, and he continued to the last to balance the support of the Pagans against that of the Christians, and refrain from breaking with either. While, indeed, he seemed content with maintaining an outward show of equality between the two faiths, he was well aware that circumstances were working strongly in favour of the younger. The exemption he accorded to the Christian priesthood from the charges of municipal office was the same which had been long granted to the Pagan ministers. But the Pagan priesthood had at the same time been burdened with other expenses incident to their office, such as the exhibition of public shows, which might be fairly set off against such an indulgence. To the Christians, on the other hand, this exemption was a sheer gain, and no doubt acted powerfully in attracting candidates for their ministry. Again, the stringent laws which Constantine enacted against the practice of divination by magic did not profess to interfere with the legitimate worship of the Pagan divinities; but, in point of fact, the Pagan worship was so closely connected with magical arts and incantations, that it could not fail to suffer from such legislation both in security and authority with the multitude. An aruspex, who might be burnt alive for performing in a private mansion the mysterious rites which were still sanctioned as a part of his public functions, was no longer likely to laugh, as of old, when he met his fellow, while the laugh of the populace might be easily raised against him. It may be added that the restrictions which the Christian emperor placed in accordance with a true religious sentiment upon the prevalent debauchery of the period, affected some of the Pagan institutions while it left their rivals unscathed. Constantine boldly closed the temples of Venus and other Pagan divinities, which had become recognised as places of public licentiousness; but the mere fact of his closing a temple at all, which no emperor before him had cared or ventured to do, struck the Pagans with a presentiment that their whole system was doomed to dissolution. The hopes of the Christians were raised in proportion. They became more and more impatient for the triumph which seemed so surely approaching.

There can be no doubt, however, that in the West, and especially at Rome itself, the adherents of the new faith were still in a small minority. Both Constantine and his next successors continued to act on this conviction. Doubtless they might trust in the long run to the natural vigour of the younger system, as well as to their assurance of its intrinsic truth, for the speedy reversal of this disparity in numbers. But two special circumstances continued to impede the progress of Christianity. The withdrawal of the emperors from Rome threw the *prestige* of authority into the hands of the Senate and nobles, and among this class, which represented the oldest blood as well as the historical traditions of the city, adherence to Paganism was almost universal. Paganism was now the fashion at Rome, and the fashions at Rome still exercised a powerful influence upon society in the West. The greatest names at Rome were those of consuls and senators, of Sophists and orators, who continued to encourage one another in their addiction to the ancient ceremonies, and with all the more zest, perhaps, as they knew that their sovereigns disliked and repudiated them. It was rarely that the Christians could boast the conversion of some leader of Roman fashion; and when such an event occurred they chanted their victory in no measured tones, and animated themselves with new hopes of the triumph so long withheld from them.

Such an instance occurred in the case of a famous rhetorician named Victorinus, who towards the end of the reign of Constantius was celebrated at Rome as the most powerful defender of the ancient ideas. Not, indeed, that he took the gods of Olympus under his special patronage, but rather the foreign divinities of Egypt, who had very commonly superseded them in the favour of the populace. Victorinus was himself a native of Africa. It was by the teaching of foreigners that these foreign superstitions were always most powerfully recommended. The orator was received with general acclamations. He was honoured with the title of 'Clarissimus,' the name by which the senators were legitimately distinguished. His statue was erected in the forum of Trajan among the most illustrious citizens of the later empire. But Victorinus, in the midst of these applauses, felt a doubt as to his position. His friend Simplicianus, had combined the study of Plato with a profession of Christian belief, and persuaded him that the truths of the Gospel were to be reached through the teaching of the highest philosophy. For a time Victorinus was content to retain his new convictions in secret. He could not all at once relinquish the advantages he derived from

the favour of the Pagan admirers who crowded round him. Simplicianus pressed him to make his profession publicly in the church. 'Why in the church?' he faintly remonstrated. 'Do the walls make the Church of Christ?' But the Christian urged him again and again. His feeble defence broke down, and he consented to be enrolled among the number of catechumens. At last it was announced that on a certain day the great champion of Paganism was solemnly to affirm his faith in the divine Saviour before the face of the people. Multitudes flocked to hear him, in dismay or doubt. It was not till he actually appeared and was recognised, and his name shouted aloud by the crowd of witnesses, that Rome could believe in so signal a conversion. Such instances were at this time rare, but when they occurred they formed a crisis in the struggle of the rival religions. It might require the apostasy of a Julian to redress the balance for a moment.

But the progress of Christianity was further impeded by the dissensions of the Christians among themselves. Almost from the first the pure truth of the Gospel had been assailed and perverted by the fancies of its ardent believers. It was impossible that a society collected from every clime and nation, and bred under every diversity of temper and training, could continue stedfast in the interpretation of the oracles delivered by its first preachers. Even in its earliest struggles, and amidst the trials of persecution, its moral influence had been marred by the prevalence of speculative heresies. But when persecution ceased and a sense of security had succeeded, the Church was more distracted than ever. There arose a Puritan party under the name of Donatists, who insisted upon tightening the bonds of discipline, and tore the Church asunder under pretence of binding it more closely together. The heresy of the Arians affected doctrine. There was no point on which the Church was more sensitive than one that touched upon the nature of the Godhead. Between the orthodox and the Arians there could be no peace. Many, indeed, were the attempts that were made in successive Councils to reconcile the irreconcilable divergence of principle which underlay the discussion. The orthodox felt that the idea of the divine unity was at stake, and the facility with which the new interpretation of the Gospel was received, the favour it encountered with successive emperors, embittered the feelings of its faithful opponents, and made the quarrels of the Christians a scandal in the eyes of their adversaries. 'No beasts of the field,' it was remarked by them, 'are so fierce against one another as the Chris-

tians against the Christians.' The Arians, however, proved themselves more successful than the orthodox in the nominal conversion of the barbarian tribes hovering on the frontier which early received from them a thin varnish of Christianity ; but the more thoughtful of the Pagans were inclined to regard this system as a spurious reproduction of their own theosophy, and were led to despise rather than to admire the counterfeit. The general upshot of the controversy probably was to spread very widely a spirit of religious indifference, and to reduce the great controversy of the day to a question of words or ceremonies.

Meanwhile Paganism at Rome continued to rear her head with little abatement of external splendour. A casual observer might hardly conjecture how much was hollow beneath the surface. Notwithstanding some expressions of a contrary import which occur in the writings of the period, it seems to be proved convincingly that under Constantius the temples were still left open, nor were their estates as yet confiscated. The sacrifices were not disused, there was no proscription of the priesthoods. On looking below the surface it might be observed, indeed, that with the general decline of wealth and energy the temples fell into disrepair, their property dwindled away, the prodigality of offerings and ceremonies was curtailed ; the priesthood with its attendant expenses was regarded as a burden rather than an honour. The Pagans were apt to imagine that this decline was the direct effect of prohibition ; the Christians more justly ascribed it to natural decay and decrepitude ; but at Rome at least it does not seem, in any case, to mark a distinct advance in Christianity. It was not till the Church became more united in herself that she was enabled to enter bodily upon the abandoned inheritance of her predecessors.

Such were the circumstances under which the apostate emperor resolved to strike a blow for the recovery of the ancient faith. Naturally sensitive and enthusiastic, his genius was inflamed by the study of the ancient creeds and philosophies which his guardians had incautiously allowed him. He had learnt to combine, after the fashion of the eclectic Paganism of the day, the legends of the Homeric mythology with the moral and spiritual theories of the schools ; he could prostrate himself before the image of Jupiter or Apollo as the concrete representatives of actual beings which were themselves in their turn only the representatives of abstract ideas. He became early imbued with a strong repulsion from Christianity, which presented itself to him as the religion of the court, and

deformed accordingly with many and gross corruptions, and still more as the religion of the tyrant who had been the persecutor of his family and the murderer of his only brother. It was almost inevitable that Julian should imbibe a mortal hatred of the faith which Constantius had disgraced with so much of cruelty and of personal depravity. Not in Julian only but in other Pagans of this period we can trace a suppressed disgust at the moral inconsistencies which disfigured the progress of the rival faith, and which were, as usual, most conspicuous in the highest places both of the Church and of the State.

While, however, we allow the excuse which may be pleaded for Julian's lapse in religion, we must remark, in justice to the creed he repudiated, that it was he, and not his Christian opponents, that set the example of repression and persecution. To the end of the reign of Constantius, and even later, it cannot be truly said of the Christian rulers that they employed forcible means for the advancement of their faith. The authorities which have been sometimes alleged to the contrary may be met by counter-statements which seem on the whole convincing. But the religious policy of Julian admits of no such favourable extenuation. Not that he followed the barbarous examples of the persecutors of old in devoting the believers to the sword, the fire, and the lions. The Christians were now far too powerful to be so treated. The temper of the times was more humane; the feelings of the Pagans towards them had softened on more familiar acquaintance. Nor was Julian himself, it may be added, inclined by nature to cruelty or violence. He did not even adopt the milder injustice of closing the Christian churches, or confiscating their endowments. He employed a subtler method of repression, and one which, if his life had been prolonged, might possibly have inflicted a severer blow upon the faith, and retarded its progress more effectually. It was much to his honour that he rather exerted himself to write down the religion of the Galileans, as he contemptuously called the Christians, thinking to brand them with ignominy in the eyes of the Greeks and Romans by noting their obscure provincial origin. But they had outlived the obloquy of the Cross, and neither his arguments nor his ridicule would have much availed him. He took at last the harsher step of shutting the schools and colleges against them, forbidding them to exercise the function of Sophists or teachers, and so degrading them in the eyes of the learned and literary classes of his subjects. He over-rated, perhaps, in his pedantry the amount of this degradation in the

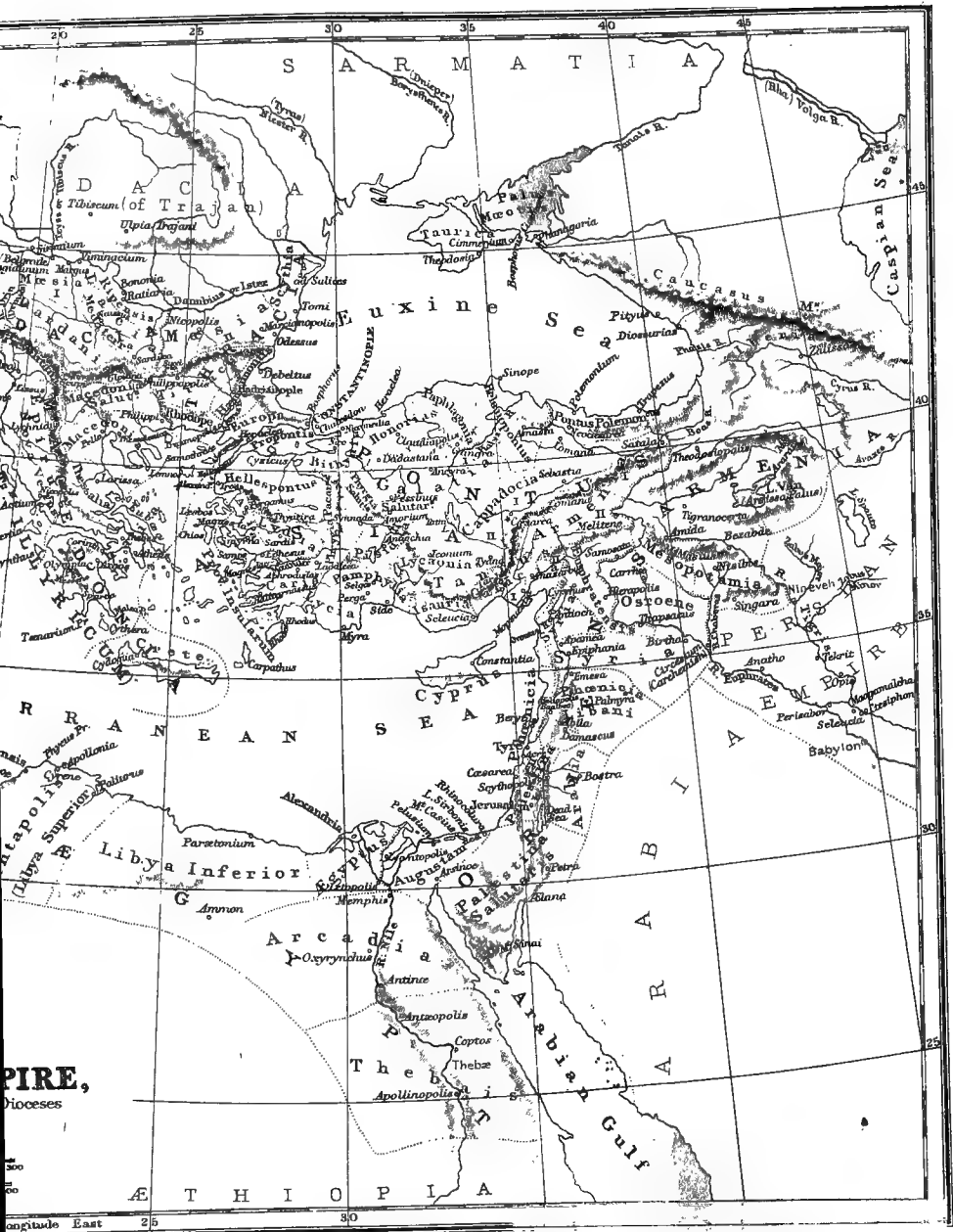
eyes of the multitude. He forgot undoubtedly that the Gospel had been first preached and widely disseminated by preachers with little tincture of secular knowledge. As it had been before so, we may well believe, would it have been again; but we can conceive that the interdiction of literature to the believers at this juncture would have been a serious though certainly not a fatal blow had it been long continued. At all events, we may remark with interest how strong the spirit of letters was now among them. Forbidden to study or lecture upon Homer and Æschylus, they turned the Scriptures into Greek hexameters and iambics, and persisted in the cultivation of taste and imagination with no little success even under these adverse circumstances.

Julian made yet another effort to refute the pretensions of his adversaries. The Christians pointed to the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem as a standing evidence to the truth of their Master's prophecy, and declared that the sentence once executed upon it was final and irreversible. The Temple had never been rebuilt. It never should, it never could, be rebuilt. Upon this issue they were prepared to stake the truth of their religion. Julian determined to test it. In the plenitude of his secular power he gave orders to rebuild the Temple. He sent a body of workmen to excavate the ruins which still cumbered the site, and to lay his new foundations. The work was proceeding vigorously when, according to the account we have received even from a Pagan historian, the men were interrupted and utterly discomfited by a violent convulsion of the earth, with fire and smoke and sulphureous exhalations. The Christians exultingly claimed it for a miracle. The Pagans themselves seem to have been awed and dismayed by it. Even Julian had, perhaps, his misgivings; at least he made no further attempt to prosecute his venturesome defiance. The circumstance has been readily accounted for by natural causes; but it would be weakness in a Christian to shut his eyes to the Providence which arrested the enemy of Christ and baffled his machinations, at a moment when the faith of multitudes was no doubt trembling in the balance.

Another mode, in which the apostate undertook to combat the enemy is perhaps more curious than any of these. He attempted not only a ceremonial but a moral revival of Paganism itself. Other champions before him, such as Augustus and Domitian, had made an effort to restore the temples, the sacrifices, and the ritual usages of the ancient faith. But no emperor, no lawgiver, no philosopher had conceived the idea of breathing a moral spirit into the juggling

of the priesthood. Many kings and many sages of the ancient world had proclaimed more or less enlightened principles of morality ; but in these movements the priests as such had taken, it would seem, no part whatever. The gods of Olympus had never been represented as models of the social virtues. The worship of such gods had never been illustrated by moral precepts. The graces of justice, humanity, and mercy were no more enforced in the service of the temples than those of purity and godly living. But Julian had profited by the principles of the religion he so unfortunately opposed. He felt the disadvantage at which Paganism stood in its contest with a system which declared that a true faith must be shown by good deeds. He did not shrink from urging the Pagans to take the Christians as an example in moral conduct, and emulate them in works of charity, while they excelled them, as he proclaimed, in real piety. It speaks well both for the head and the heart of the most honest worshipper the idols could ever boast, that he specially enjoined the foundation of hospitals for the care of the sick, an institution which at least on any large and notable scale seems to have been absolutely unknown in Pagan society.

It was natural perhaps for the Christians to heap obloquy upon the name of the 'apostate' whose genius they could not appreciate, and from whom they had encountered a check and an affront. It is important, however, to observe how imperfect was the sympathy with their patron which even the Pagans generally entertained. They did not fail, indeed, to do justice to the ability of his government, both in peace and war, and to the grandeur of the designs he conceived and partly executed, though cut off before middle life. But upon his attempt to revive the ceremonial of their faith they looked with undisguised contempt. The Christians had resented the slackness of Constantine, and were inclined to attribute his remissness in enforcing the true faith at the point of the sword to his imputed leaning towards the Arian heresy ; but the Pagans, on the contrary, mocked at Julian for the very zeal and enthusiasm he manifested in their cause. The fact was that the philosophers or Sophists of the day, while professing themselves votaries of the ancient religion, had no regard either for its ritual or for its doctrines, and took but a languid interest in its traditions ; while even among its blinder adherents the routine of rites and sacrifices had become burdensome, and was practically evaded to the utmost. A story is told of Julian's disgust when he found that the hecatombs which should have been lavished on one of the greatest shrines in Asia had dwindled to the offering of



one paltry goose, and that the priest who made the sacrifice was himself insensible to the degradation of his patron deity. It is evident that Paganism as a dogmatic and a ritual system was rapidly dying out, and that the toleration which Constantine had accorded to it was effectually advancing the interests of the rival faith. The substantial advance of Christianity under this equal treatment, impeded though it was by many internal hindrances, bears striking testimony to the force of justice in the cause of truth.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

Succession of Jovian—Abandonment of the provinces beyond the Tigris—Succession of Valentinian I. in the West and Valens in the East—Final division of the empire—State of religion and progress of Christianity at Rome—Contest for the bishopric of Rome—Triumph of Damasus—Succession of Gratian in the West and association with him of Valentinian II.—Influence of Ambrosius, bishop of Milan—The statue of Victory removed from the Senate-house—Rival orations of Symmachus and Ambrosius—Death of Valens and appointment of Theodosius I. in the East—Revolt of Maximus and death of Gratian.—(A.D. 363–383.)

THE general indifference to the great religious question of the day is marked by the content with which the soldiers of Julian, who had been invited to attend the daily sacrifices of their late commander, now followed the Christian standard of the labarum under which Jovian conducted his retreat. The army, indeed, was too much distressed by the hardships it had to undergo to think of anything but its own safety. The unarmed population of the East was dismayed at the surrender of the strong fortress of Nisibis, together with all claim that might yet survive to the provinces beyond the Tigris, and the renunciation of alliance with Armenia. The people of Antioch felt themselves once more exposed to the assault of the Persians, who had already so often threatened them. But the line of the Euphrates constituted a good frontier for the defence of the empire; nor, indeed, did Sapor venture to demand the cession of the broad and fertile plain of Mesopotamia, which still remained a portion of the Roman dominions. Jovian, the elect of the army, seems to have been a man of some conduct and ability; but his reign, which lasted no more than seven months, was too short to put his qualities fully to the test. While professing himself a Christian and an orthodox believer, he maintained the principle of religious

equality with the heretics as well as the Pagans; and while he reinstated Athanasius in his episcopal authority he seems to have exhibited no intolerance towards the Arians. He fell sick and
A.D. 364. died in his progress towards Constantinople. In Rome, so long abandoned by its emperors, the situation of parties remained altogether unchanged.

The ministers or officers who attended on the late emperor's progress again offered the purple to a chief of their own selection. It was refused by Sallustius, but accepted by Valentinian, a Panonian soldier of low origin but distinguished prowess. This successful adventurer was, indeed, a mere soldier, devoid of any tincture of letters; but he brought to the throne the habits of a strict disciplinarian, and he carried on the civil government in the same spirit and with the same success with which he had led the legions to victory in Africa and Britain. His first act on arriving at Constantinople was to divide the empire he had acquired between himself and his brother Valens, assuming for his own share the government of the Western provinces. The arrangement thus effected for the third time was final. The empires of the East and the West were never again united. Valentinian, on quitting the East, took up his residence at first at Milan, nor does it appear that he ever visited his ancient capital. Indeed, almost the whole of his reign was occupied with military operations on the northern frontiers. The borders of Gaul were again infested by the Allemanni. The emperor repaired to Trèves, and from thence directed the strengthening of the fortresses on the Rhine, and engaged in person in many battles with the hordes of invaders. His courage and activity were in full request; though often victorious, he was never able to inflict a decisive blow upon his irrepressible enemies. His personal energy and conduct in the administration of affairs were repeatedly thwarted by the corruption of the officers whom he was obliged to employ; and the severity with which it was necessary to punish them has branded him with an imputation of cruelty beyond his deserts. Few or none of the later emperors have left a higher character for vigour, capacity, and justice. He associated with himself his son Gratian while yet an infant, and so bred him up that he might be fit to assume the government on his
A.D. 375. own decease. He repressed the assaults of the barbarians and the jealousies of his own officers through a reign of twelve years; but he died, in the prosecution of his last campaign on the Danube, from the effect, it is said, of a casual access of uncontrollable passion.

The Pagans at Rome sullenly accepted the reverse which had befallen their religion. It is probable, indeed, that the attempted revival under Julian had been little felt in the West. The Christians continued to encroach upon their adversaries, and to evince their superior zeal and activity. The reign of Valentinian is not wanting, indeed, in monuments which attest the countenance the orthodox Christian emperor still bestowed upon the Pagan rites and usages. The priesthoods of the ancient cults were still sought by persons of distinction; altars and even temples were from time to time erected to the ancient divinities; the emperor still continued to affect the style of Supreme Pontiff, though this, it would seem, was now regarded as an empty title, and was no longer connected with the offer of sacrifices to the idols in the Capitol. Indeed, we must consider the maintenance of the Pagan services as little more than a form, though the multitude clung not the less pertinaciously to it on that account. They retained a superstitious dread of the omission of external ceremonies long after they had ceased to attach to them any intelligent belief. The real belief of the age was fixed, in fact, on sorcery and magic. But these idle fancies had no historical or ceremonial basis, and the emperor, who especially dreaded them, did not scruple to denounce and persecute them. Julian, while he flattered and caressed the ancient religions, was unsparing in his attacks upon magic, though, indeed, like many emperors before him, he did not refrain from consulting the magicians on his own account. Valentinian was not less opposed to this prevailing form of superstition, and the Paganism of the day was so closely mixed up with it that in his prosecution of the one he may have seemed to abandon in some degree the impartiality he professed in regard to the other.

On the whole, however, the Pagans had little or no ground to complain of his policy towards them. If the Christians continued to advance even at the centre of the ancient religion, within the precincts which were most closely surrounded by all its outward shows of pomp and power, this was mainly owing to the vigour and energy with which they exerted themselves. We can hardly venture to trace their success to the genuine spirit of the religion they professed. They won their way at this period not by lowliness and meekness, or the graces which had signalled the professors of the faith in purer times. The office of bishop of Rome, which in the absence of the chief secular authority had assumed no mean secular importance, had become an object of contentious rivalry, and was sought by all the artifice and violence which had

formerly disgraced the competition for the consulship. The emperors had long since curbed the civil ambition of the Roman nobles by the direct appointment of the chief officers of the state. But they had taken no such precaution with regard to the Christian hierarchy. On the death of the bishop or pope Liberius, in the year 366, the struggle for the succession broke out into popular violence, and resulted in a sanguinary contest. It is not in the councils of the Church only that the fatal rivalry of Damasus and Ursicinus is set forth. The heathen historian of the period narrates the event in the same spirit with which Livy described so many ages before the civil strife of consuls and tribunes. The prize, he says, was magnificent; it conferred wealth and splendour; it gained the devotion of women of the highest rank; it placed the fortunate aspirant at the pinnacle of fashion as well as of luxury. The election was in the hands of the whole multitude of believers; but the rules under which it was conducted were perhaps but imperfectly determined. Each of the rivals claimed a legal triumph; the actual victory remained with Damasus, who has been recognised as legitimate Pope by ecclesiastical tradition; but, in fact, the quarrel seems to have been decided by arms; and all accounts agree that such was the tumult, so numerous and so furious the combatants on either side, that the prefect of the city confessed himself unable to maintain the peace between them, and was obliged to retire in confusion without the walls. The riot lasted apparently for several days, and spread from quarter to quarter. In one Christian church, and on a single day, as many as a hundred and sixty persons were reported to have been killed. Damasus gained the upper hand; but Ursicinus returned again and again to the fray. But the first, it is maliciously said, was the favourite with the ladies of Rome, and remained finally in possession. The force of female influence was at least a new feature in the contests of the Roman democracy.

The episcopal chair of Rome was now indeed a prize which might too easily excite the cupidity of any ecclesiastic in whom the true principles of the faith had not extinguished all temporal ambition. The separation of the East and West had tended to exalt the religious dignity of the ancient capital as much as it had abased its secular authority. The great Eastern patriarchates of Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem had all held themselves equal or superior to Rome. The General Councils of the Church, which had defined the faith at Nicæa and Constantinople, had been composed almost wholly of Orientals. But the bishop of Rome, though held

in little account beyond the *Ægean* or the *Adriatic*, reigned supreme in the veneration of the Western believers. There was no church in Gaul or Spain, none other even in Italy, that could boast to have been founded by an Apostle. Milan, the imperial capital, was merely a military fortress, to which the emperor resorted for his own personal security, but Rome was still paramount throughout the West as the centre of ideas and letters. The most cultivated and the most learned of the Pagans still congregated in the ancient metropolis of the Pagan world, and were supported by vast multitudes, probably a large proportion of the whole population, and whatever remained of the wealth, pomp, and ceremony which had made the worship of the idols glorious. Accordingly Rome was a worthy arena for the conflict between the opposing religions, and afforded scope for all the zeal and talents which the Christians could devote to it. The head of the church militant at Rome was truly an emperor in the field, requiring and obtaining the implicit obedience of all his soldiers in their several capacities, of the priests who regularly ministered in sacred things to their respective congregations, of their regular army of devotees, ascetics, and monks who made incursions into the ranks of the enemy, of the learned ecclesiastics who engaged in single combat with the picked champions of the ancient philosophies. The organisation of the Church was steadily and promptly advancing; and to Rome, as the centre of discipline, the mother of the camps, the eyes of the faithful were constantly turned; the bishop of Rome became more than an ordinary leader; he was the general-in-chief of the whole spiritual armament. The term *papa* or *pope*, derived from the East, and applied there to any spiritual father of the people, was soon attached and confined to him by the Latin Church, as a title of superior honour and authority. He assumed and gradually enforced a special jurisdiction over the other bishops of Italy, which were known by the name of *Suburbicarian*, from their relation to his metropolitan city. He was not, indeed, yet conscious of the splendid destiny which awaited him. He put forth no historical claims to power or even to precedence; nor did he feel the mortification to which he would have been exposed had he done so, by the rebuffs he might have experienced from other bishops of greater ability and influence than himself. But it may be allowed that the civil eminence of the popes of Rome first dates from the notable election of the ambitious *Damasus*.

Meanwhile the Pagans watched the advance of the hostile

church with sullen vexation veiled under an appearance of lofty disdain. They did not condescend to argue with its votaries, and the time had gone by when they could attempt to repress them by force. They still flattered themselves with the proud conviction that the greatness of the empire was the special gift of the gods of the empire. They could not perceive or refused to acknowledge any diminution as yet in that greatness. Rome herself was as magnificent as ever; and removed as she now was from the real centres of political action, she was less able to observe her decline in political vigour which might be sufficiently apparent at Milan or Constantinople, at Trèves or at Antioch. The most conspicuous leaders of the old Roman sentiment at this period were two senators of learning and refinement. The one bore the name of Vettius Prætextatus, and we may infer that he was of genuine Roman birth and origin. He had served public offices abroad, and had been proconsul of Achaia. But his residence was principally confined to the city, where he enjoyed the greatest consideration as a philosopher, as well as the highest dignities of the priesthood. He had been initiated alike into the solemn mysteries of Ceres, of Cybele, of Astarte, and of Mithras. An inscription still extant records the various sacred functions he had performed, and the honourable titles he had thence acquired, in which, it seems, his wife was also associated. He had consecrated twelve statues in the Capitol to the guardian deities of Rome, and it was in Rome herself, the divine object of the divine care, that all his religion and all his philosophy centred. A second chief among the pagans was Symmachus, who was especially celebrated as an orator. He became prefect of Rome, and had gained the admiration of the people by the boldness with which he resisted the imposition of fresh taxes upon them. The position of these eminent men towards Christianity was plainly defined by an occurrence soon to be related in which they were required to take a distinguished part.

On the premature decease of Valentinian the empire of the West was imperilled by the prospect of family disunion between his two sons, Gratian, the elder, born of his first wife Severa, whom he had repudiated, who was now in his seventeenth year, and the younger, named after himself, the offspring of his later and favourite consort Justina, who was still a child. Whatever were the intrigues by which the courts were agitated, the army remained loyal to the elder claimant. Gratian had been left at Trèves, where he discharged the imperial functions in which he had been already associated with

his father; and when it became known that the legions in Gaul accepted him the soldiers on the Danube promptly acquiesced. The prince himself was of a kindly disposition. While he recalled his own mother from the obscurity to which she had been consigned he declared that he would be himself the protector of his infant brother, and invested him at once with the ensigns of power. The real authority remained, of course, with the elder son of Valentinian, and his marriage with a granddaughter of the great Constantine introduced him formally into the Flavian family, which had inherited in the minds of the people the tradition of imperial sanctity. Up to this time the emperors had been successively deified after death. They had assumed, as we have seen, the title of Sovereign Pontiff. They had allowed themselves to be invested with the robe of honour which, above all other tokens, consecrated that august office in the eyes of the Pagan multitude. But the Christian sentiment was beginning to prevail against the antique tradition. Gratian had been placed by his father under the special instructions of Ambrose, bishop of Milan, the greatest of the Christian teachers of his day, whose election to the see by the vehement acclamations of the people had already marked an era in Church history. Gratian had learnt to regard his baptismal faith with more than a conventional respect. He was prepared to act upon it as a matter of spiritual conviction. When the envoys of the Senate conveyed to him the pontifical robes he decisively refused to wear them. Monuments, indeed, may be shown on which the title of Pontiff still follows this emperor's name; but at least he would not dishonour his person with the vestments attaching to it. The distinction he made in his mind may be too subtle for us to appreciate, but to himself and his own contemporaries it was no doubt significant and consistent. We may compare it perhaps with the political figment by which our king Henry VIII. still retained the title of Defender of the Faith, after he had rejected the special dogmas of the faith which he had originally defended.

The Pagans at Rome were no doubt sorely dismayed at this rebuff. They could not hope that the ruler who had made so strong a declaration of his own belief would long continue to maintain the impartiality which had hitherto characterised the actions of the Christian emperors before him. They were well aware of the increasing strength of the Christian party, and of the pressure which it would put upon him. It would be rash, indeed, to conjecture that the revolt which eventually broke out against him was fomented by

the intrigues of the Pagans. It is not unlikely, however, that their discontent was then very audibly expressed. When a chief named Maximus rose against him their truculent jest passed, it is said, from mouth to mouth : ' If Gratian will not be our pontifex maximus, Maximus shall soon be our pontifex.' "

But before this crisis arrived the emperor had inflicted another and even a more cruel blow on the prejudices of the Pagans at Rome. The curia Julia, erected by the first of the Cæsars in the Roman Forum, had been commonly used for the meetings of the Senate throughout the imperial period. It was distinguished by an altar to Victory, which stood before a statue of the goddess who in the later ages was most specially regarded as the patron of the city. This statue was said to have been taken from the Tarentines, and was decorated with the richest ornaments that Augustus had brought home from Egypt. At the commencement of each sitting the senators were wont to burn some grains of incense upon this altar, and it was before this image that they took their oath of fidelity to the emperor. It would seem that Constantius had caused this statue to be removed from the Senate-house ; but at the moment this act had caused little excitement ; the Pagans may have felt more secure in their position, or the known impartiality of the emperor disarmed their resentment. On the accession, however, of Julian the cherished idol had been promptly restored, and was now regarded perhaps with more jealous honour than before. Valentinian had continued to respect it. The senators might still regard it as a pledge of the eventual triumph of the ancient faith, rendered all the more precious to them by the perils which they knew were gathering around it. But Gratian, we have seen, would make no such compromise. Even the old Roman Senate, as he was taught to believe by his teacher Ambrose, was divided within itself. A minority, no doubt, but still a powerful party within its walls, avowed itself Christian ; many more, it may be supposed, would soon follow when the emperor should take a decided lead. The Christians might plausibly urge the hardship of being made partakers in a Pagan usage or even witnesses of it. They demanded no more than equality with their opponents ; but to grant this equality would be in fact to deal a severe blow to the Pagans. The Senate-house was not a *tabula rasa* on which the contending parties could meet on equal terms ; to listen to the complaints of the one was to abolish the privilege and trample on the pride of the other.

Accordingly when the imperial command arrived to remove the

altar and the statue from the Curia the Pagans were thoroughly alarmed and roused to vigorous action. The emperor was quietly residing at Milan; the Western empire was tranquil; the citizens of Rome had been long disused to arms, and the leaders of the ancient faith counselled no attempt at rebellion or violence. The Christians, it may be believed, were more ready to give a blow than to wait for one, and however inferior they might be in numbers, were full of spirit and confidence. It was determined to send a deputation to the emperor; but the Christian senators declared at the same time that if the emperor gave it a favourable reception they would themselves secede in a body from the house, and they took care that their bishop Damasus should employ the powerful agency of Ambrose in their behalf. What might have been the number of these dissentients it is impossible to say. Prudentius, a rhetorical poet, writing twenty years later, says in one place that six hundred senatorial families had become converts; but in another he can enumerate six only. At all events there were enough of them to enable the emperor to refuse admission to the complainants on the ground that they did not represent the whole body. The Christians who advised him to this course wished perhaps to gain time. Their strength was no doubt increasing every day.

The Pagans, on their side, could not afford delay. When the young Valentinian was associated in the empire they made it a pretext for addressing the two rulers together with a second appeal. In the year 382 they deputed their great orator Symmachus to plead their cause, and the emperors consented, requiring only that he should transmit his argument in writing, and submit it to Ambrose for a suitable reply. The discourses of the two opponents are both preserved to us; it does not often happen that the victorious advocate in a theological controversy suffers the pleading of his adversary, even though defeated, to survive. The speeches on both sides are undoubtedly interesting, though neither of them may seem, to the ideas and taste of our generation, to rise to the height of the great argument before them. We may be assured, however, that we have in our hands the threads of reflexion and association which, as a matter of fact, attached at the time the great parties of the ancient world to their respective creeds. The poetical rhapsody of Prudentius, of a later date, though it presents some literary merits of its own, has no such ring of genuine sentiment and passion. Ambrose, as might be expected, was successful. The emperors decided that the image now removed should not be restored. Their decision was supported,

it is said, by the chief magistrates of the empire, some of whom seem to have suffered themselves to be converted on the occasion. It is clear that the common feeling of mankind was slowly gravitating towards the new religion. The emperors themselves were rather following than leading it.

The triumphant career of the great conquering republic had been the chief argument for their creed in the mouths of the Pagans. It was difficult even yet to persuade the children of Rome that the city and the empire were not founded for an eternity of dominion. But when the rulers of the state had themselves become Christian, and were beginning to exalt the new religion above the old, the Pagans might naturally ascribe any disasters that befell them to the offence thus given to their ancient divinities. It was fortunate, perhaps, for the cause of their opponents that the government of Gratian was marked throughout by successful warfare on the frontiers, and by peace and prosperity within them. By the aid of his foreign auxiliaries, and of his Frankish general Mellobaudes, this emperor gained some great victories over the Allemanni. Gratian himself conducted an army across the Rhine and shared in the honours of these successes. The West was already so far divorced in sentiment from the East that the great disaster of the emperor

A.D. 378. Valens, who was defeated and slain by the Goths near

Adrianople, was regarded with little interest at Rome. For a moment Gratian might claim the united empire as his own, but he was anxious to throw off the increased burden. He transferred to his ablest general, Theodosius, the command of the forces he had collected in that quarter, associated him with himself in power, and finally placed him upon the throne at Constantinople. With the help of the new emperor of the East, and seconded by the efforts of his Frankish captains, Bauto and Arbogastes, he effected a settlement of affairs on the Danube, by which, indeed, vast regions in Mæsia and Pannonia were delivered up to the Goths and other tribes from the German frontier, and the peace of the whole realm and the civilisation of the South secured, as was fondly imagined, for a lengthened period. The Roman world was willing to believe that its greatness and glory were increased rather than diminished under the sway of the first Christian emperor who had had 'the courage of his convictions,' and had dared to remove the Image of Victory from her shrine in the Roman Senate.

Gratian seems to have been of a mild and docile temper, easily led by the influence of his able counsellor the bishop of Milan. The

orthodox Christians may have exaggerated what they considered his merits towards the Church, in representing him as a persecutor both of the Pagans on one side and of the heretics on the other. The pertinacity with which the Pagan party at Rome continued to appeal to him and to Theodosius for the restoration of their favourite image was due, perhaps, to something more than the loss of the image itself. The Christian emperor was, no doubt, gradually appropriating the revenues of various temples and priestly offices, which were falling into disuse and abeyance. The disestablishment and disendowment of a falling religion was proceeding in its natural course, and required no overt and general action of the government. The prohibition of legacies to the Vestal Virgins, if truly ascribed to it, may have been a special measure dictated by the jealousy of the Christians, among whom the profession of celibacy was beginning to be held in high honour, and the assumption of the same virtue by the Pagans was considered as in a manner insulting. The bitterness of the Christian apologists against this particular form of Pagan tradition is not unworthy of remark.

Gratian survived the death of Valens and the new partition of the empire four or five years only. He had addicted himself to idle and unworthy pleasures, associating himself in the sports of the barbarian Alaric, to whom he intrusted the protection of his person, devoted to hunting and shooting with the bow and arrow, more like a barbarian himself than the descendant of a long line of Roman princes. He did not, indeed, indulge in the barbarian vice of intemperance, nor was his conduct to the last sullied by cruelty. Nevertheless he had forfeited the esteem of his subjects, both Pagan and Christian, and he had laid himself bare to the attack of the first adventurous rebel. The province of Britain was held by a military force which had been long permanently quartered there, and had been accustomed to regard itself as in a great degree separate from the main body of the army. On a former occasion it had proclaimed, and for some years supported, an emperor of its own choice. It had recently been strengthened by the exactions of the elder Theodosius, who had repressed the inroads of the Caledonians, and placed the whole island in a state of defence against the barbarians of the North and the Saxon pirates who swarmed along its shores. The garrison of Britain had become secure and insolent. It saluted as emperor a captain named Maximus, a countryman of the younger Theodosius. It may be true that Maximus sought to decline the perilous honour, but whatever might be the risks of exercising sove-

reignty, there could be little danger of defeat in a revolt against the weak and unpopular prince who now affected to hold it. Gratian, who resided for the most part in one of the great cities of Gaul, was now at Paris, where Julian had planted an imperial palace. Maximus crossed the Channel; the soldiers of Gratian refused to arm against him. The luckless emperor fled southward, with the intention of joining the forces of Valentinian in Italy, and seeking, perhaps, further succour from Theodosius in the East. But he suffered himself to be deluded by false hopes, and lingered in the neighbourhood of Lyons till he was overtaken by the enemy, seized

A.D. 383.

as he rose from supper, and promptly assassinated. The usurpation of Maximus was confirmed by the death of Mellobaudes. He could afford to disregard the enmity of the young Valentinian, and betook himself to negotiating with Theodosius. The ruler of the East, whether from indifference or policy, took no pains to avenge the slaughter of his own benefactor. He was content that the murderer of Gratian should reign beyond the Alps, but stipulated that Valentinian should be confirmed in the sovereignty of Italy, Illyricum, and Africa. The Roman world was thus for a moment once more divided among a triumvirate of rulers.

CHAPTER LXXV.

Theodosius overthrows Maximus and visits Rome—Authority assumed by Arbogastes—He murders Valentinian II., and places Eugenius on the throne of the West—Last attempt to revive Paganism—Theodosius overcomes Eugenius, closes the temples, and suppresses the priesthoods—His death, A.D. 395—The power of the Church as asserted by Ambrose against Theodosius—Review of events on the Danube—Irruption of the Goths—Death of Valens, A.D. 378—Arcadius and Honorius emperors, and their ministers Rufinus and Stilicho—The Goths under Alaric ravage Greece—Stilicho drives them back—Alaric establishes himself in Illyria—He invades Italy—Victories of Stilicho at Pollentia and Verona A.D. 403—Honorius triumphs at Rome—Martyrdom of Telemachus, and suppression of the gladiatorial shows—Stilicho overthrows the Gothic chief Radagæsus, A.D. 406, and is himself assassinated by order of Honorius.—(A.D. 383–408.)

WHILE Gratian established his residence at Tréves or Paris his brother Valentinian took up his abode at Milan. The young man's tender years as well as the natural weakness of his character made him the sport of conflicting advisers. His mother Justina had brought him up in the Arian opinions, and claimed for him the licence to exercise his faith in the midst of an orthodox city even

under the eye of bishop Ambrose, the great champion of orthodoxy. The contests that ensued in consequence were a scandal to the Church; but they showed conspicuously both the abilities of Ambrose, and his power as head of a great Christian congregation. The bishop deserved, indeed, some influence at the court of Milan for the spirit with which he had conducted the negotiations entrusted to him when he was sent to the residence of Maximus in Gaul, to deter the usurper from further aggression. But his own conduct towards his sovereign was, in fact, hardly less aggressive. The arms he wielded were spiritual. When the emperor was at last induced to require his departure from Milan he arrogantly refused obedience, and was enabled, by the support of the popular sentiment, to produce an array of pretended miracles, which effectually quelled the rising spirit of his youthful sovereign.

Maximus was himself a Christian. He too had recognised the superior fortune of the new faith, and had recently consented to be converted. The Pagans, who had been again repulsed on appealing to Valentinian for the restoration of their beloved Image, could have no better hope from the adversary who was slowly preparing to overthrow him. It was not till four years after the death of Gratian that the ruler of Gaul ventured to lead an army across the Alps. He had lulled Valentinian into security, and suddenly appeared at the gates of Milan before his attack was anticipated. The young emperor and his mother could barely make their escape to Aquileja, and from thence set sail for the East and throw themselves upon the protection of Theodosius. By him they were kindly received, and aid was promised them; but the orthodox emperor did not fail to urge upon them the duty of relinquishing their offensive tenets, nor do they seem to have scrupled to do so. Meanwhile, Italy surrendered to Maximus without a blow, but his courage and capacity were not equal to his fortune. Theodosius, who had now taken Galla, the sister of Valentinian, for his consort, conducted the war with determined vigour. The Huns, the Goths, and the Alani contended on his side against the Gauls and Germans who sustained the throne of the ruler of the West. The Romans themselves looked on without concern for either party. Maximus, indeed, had once shown himself in Rome, though with what purpose is not apparent. Of what he did there we read only that he expressed his displeasure at the violence of the Christians, who had demolished a Jewish synagogue, and whom he required to restore it. It is also said that he listened to an harangue of the Pagan orator Symmachus, at which

the Christians were displeased in their turn; but whether he took any steps in favour of the old religion is wholly uncertain. He seems to have derived no assistance from either party. He had none

A.D. 389. but his armed followers to rely upon. He was speedily

defeated by the superior prowess of Theodosius at Siscia, on the Save, and when he sought refuge in Aquileia was so hotly pursued that the enemy entered the gates behind him, seized him upon his throne, and handed him over to the executioner.

The victor remained three years in Italy, and was for that time at least the actual ruler of the West as well as of the East. But he made no pretensions to the title of emperor beyond the limits of the sovereignty already assigned to him, allowing the young Valentinian to combine under his sceptre all the re-united provinces which had obeyed his father and his brother. Theodosius paid also a visit to Rome. He too was greeted with a panegyric by another orator of the day, Pacatus Drepanius, an illustrious Pagan, who did not hesitate to call the Christian emperor's attention to the decorations of the Pagan temples even then conspicuous, in which the labours of Hercules, the triumph of Bacchus, and the combats of the gods and giants were elaborately represented. Theodosius evinced no displeasure. We read afterwards of the same Drepanius as proconsul of Africa and otherwise distinguished. The visit of Theodosius and the young Valentinian to Rome is also signalised by Claudian, and we may be surprised, perhaps, at the freedom with which the Pagan poet sings of the ancient mythology, and the honour in which its emblems are still held in the ancient capital.

An officer named Arbogastes served in the legions which protected Valentinian in Italy. His valour or his fortune gave him an ascendancy over the soldiers. He had held a high command under Theodosius, and he gained a victory for his new master against the Franks, from which nation he was himself descended. His success made him arrogant, and he presumed to recompense his own services without asking the sovereign's sanction. Valentinian was offended, and ventured to degrade him before his courtiers. Arbogastes proudly declared that it was not from the stripling prince that he had received his promotion, nor to him that he would pay sub-

A.D. 392. mission. He tore the rescript in pieces, and indignantly

quitted the presence. Theodosius, it may be presumed, had now departed from Italy. Valentinian knew not how to enforce his hasty decree, and Arbogastes, while retaining his position, speedily seized an opportunity to have him assassinated.

Our slender records afford us no means of judging of the character of the Frankish chief into whose hands the empire of the West now seemed naturally to fall. We cannot conjecture why he declined to seize, though a Frank and a barbarian, a prize which had been coveted and held by many adventurers of similar origin before him. So it was, however, that Arbogastes preferred to confer the sovereignty rather than to keep it. He chose for the high but empty dignity a man who is described as a grammarian, and styled the chief secretary of the imperial household. His name was Eugenius. He is said to have been of elegant manners as well as of learning and eloquence, and he was recommended to Arbogastes by the friendship of the general Ricomer on the one hand, and of the orator Symmachus on the other. Doubtless the crafty Frank meant to retain the real power in his own hands. The only circumstance which attaches any interest to this vulgar arrangement is the profession of Paganism made by the new emperor, the last Pagan who occupied either the Western throne or the Eastern. Arbogastes himself is said to have been inclined to the ancient superstition. Symmachus was ardently devoted to it. The Pagans seem for a moment to have recovered their courage, and to have entered into a conspiracy to grasp at their lost honours. A sudden revival of the ancient usages was now conspicuous throughout Italy. The temples were reopened, and crowded with fanatical worshippers. The sacrifices were redoubled. Pontiffs, augurs, and Vestal Virgins paraded themselves with a pomp which had long fallen into abeyance. The Christians were terrified and dismayed. Ambrose himself, who had had the courage to pronounce a panegyric on the murdered prince, unsullied by a single word in honour of his murderer, now condescended to soothe and flatter the enemy of his faith. But Eugenius, though personally, it is supposed, a philosopher rather than a fanatic, was constrained to obey the fanatical demands of his supporters, and to reinstate the statue of Victory in its place of honour in the Senate-house, though not till he had more than once rejected the appeals that were pressed upon him. This restitution was probably accompanied with the surrender of the estates of the priesthoods which had suffered confiscation, and the question of money may have counted much both in the urgency of the solicitors and the deliberations of the emperor. The victorious party were immoderate in their exultation. The bishop of Milan was horrified to hear them threaten that they would soon turn the chief church of his faithful city into a stable.

The murder of Valentinian had excited the lively indignation of Theodosius, but he was not immediately at leisure to avenge it. When his preparations for war were at last completed Eugenius and Arbogastes were not unprepared to meet him. They fortified the passes of the Julian Alps, and at the same time placed them, as the Christians affirmed, under the protection of the image of Jupiter Tonans. When the opposing forces encountered the standards of the Western emperor bore the image of Hercules; the soldiers who contended on the side of Theodosius at first gave way, and ascribed their defeat to the powerful patronage of the Pagan divinity. But

Sept. 6,
A.D. 394. Theodosius, firmly trusting in the Labarum, encouraged and reassured them, and led them again to a triumphant victory. The Christians in their enthusiasm believed that a miracle had been wrought in their behalf; a preternatural whirlwind had blown the darts of the enemy back into their own faces. Eugenius himself was captured. The victor taunted him with the impotence of his Pagan devices, first overturned his images, and then put him to death. Arbogastes fell upon his own sword. The influence of Ambrose was well used to prevent the Christians from rising against the Pagans, and to engage Theodosius to treat the conquered enemy with moderation. The Pagans, however, had chosen the arbitrament of the sword, and they had forfeited in the eyes of the emperor their prescriptive claim to equal toleration. The statue of Victory was doubtless again displaced. The suppression of Pagan rites and priesthoods, together with the confiscation of the funds on which they depended, followed apace; the law of sacrifice was abolished; the temples were rapidly closed, but rather through poverty and gradual neglect than by any direct legislation. Theodosius had expressly prohibited the Pagan worship in the East; but the West was less advanced in the new ideas and usages, and he enforced no such submission upon the adherents of the ancient cult at Rome. Nor can any reliance be placed upon the popular story that he caused the Senate to put the question between Paganism and Christianity to the vote, and that the latter carried it by a large majority.

Jan. 17,
A.D. 395. On his death, which took place within six months of the defeat of Eugenius, the common sentiment of the Pagans, though, perhaps, with no express decree of the pertinacious Senate, conferred on him the honours of divinity. His apotheosis is, indeed, commemorated not only in the rhetorical strains of the Pagan poet Claudian, but in contemporary inscriptions, of less dubious authority, still existing.

Theodosius has acquired, like Constantine, the title of 'Great,' and, like Constantine, he has owed it to the favour of the Christians, and to the notable services he performed in their behoof. He was no doubt an able general, and throughout his reign he defended the Eastern empire against the Goths, and threw himself as a firm barrier between those restless assailants and the West. He was also generous and high-minded, far beyond the example of other chiefs or sovereigns of his time. The clemency with which he spared the people of Antioch, when the dissensions of the sects among them impelled them to riot and revolt, has gained for him the warmest encomiums. When he was betrayed into an act of not less signal barbarity in the massacre of the rebellious people of Thessalonica, he obtained forgiveness and more than forgiveness from his Christian admirers for the submission he made to Ambrose, when the bishop of Milan boldly forbade him to present himself in the Christian church. The penitence of Theodosius has been celebrated in rhetoric and painting, and has borne fruit for centuries in the Church, which it first encouraged to dictate its laws to princes. This act may suffice to mark an era in our history more plainly than his decrees against the Pagans, and his destruction of the temple of Serapis at Alexandria. At this point it may be truly said the old world comes to an end and the new world commences.

We must go back, however, at this crisis a few years to the definitive establishment of the Goths on the southern bank of the Danube, within the limits of the Roman empire. The incursions of these strangers during the course of the third century have already been noticed. The valour of the Roman armies and the policy of the emperors from Diocletian to Theodosius had checked these encroachments for nearly a hundred years; but at the same time large numbers of them had been allowed to take up their residence within the frontier, and had been employed to assist in repelling the invasion of their brethren from beyond it. Meanwhile the Gothic nation, extending through the centre of Europe, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, between the limits of the Dwina and the Dnieper or Don, pressed equally upon the Franks and Germans in the West, and upon the Roman power in the South and East. They were weakened, perhaps, by their own intestine divisions. The Visigoths occupied the regions bordering upon the Danube and the Alps; the Ostrogoths roamed more freely over the steppes of Scythia and Sarmatia. The two nations came in contact at many points, and became engaged in constant war with one another, until they became united

into a compact and almost a settled empire under their great king Hermanaric, who, at the age of a hundred and ten years, according to the marvellous legend which passed for history among the terrified Romans, was still exercising his arms and perpetrating savage cruelties upon the enemies of his people. The dominion of Hermanaric extended over the regions of the modern Hungary, Poland, and Courland. But the story of the barbarians ever repeats itself. The Goths, thus settled and consolidated, were pressed in their turn by another enemy in their rear. A race more barbarous than Frank or Goth was moving irresistibly westward, from the shores of the Caspian and the Oural mountains. Tacitus long before had briefly noticed the Fenni, as a remote tribe on the very skirts of Germany, more savage and degraded than any other. We may recognise in this people the name and character of the Huns of the fourth century, a tribe of Mongolian origin, whose forms and features seemed then as hideous to the Slave, the Teuton, and the Celt as to their descendants at the present day. The Gothic legend relates how this people were supernaturally guided across a ford of the Palus Mæotis. But a mighty horde of savages roaming a continent in search of food or plunder needs no miracle to aid the instinct it follows. The Ostrogoths were sufficiently settled in their abodes on the Black Sea coast to tempt the cupidity of utter barbarians, and they, too, in their turn were too much enervated by their first essay in civilisation to offer effectual resistance to tribes still ruder and fiercer than themselves. The Huns crossed the Volga and the Don about the year 374, swept along with them the Alani on the intervening plains, and flung themselves upon the empire of Hermanaric. The aged chief was overpowered and slain. His successor, Vithimir, quickly succumbed. The Ostrogoths submitted, or forced themselves in their flight upon their Western brethren. Christianity had already penetrated among them, under the teaching of their apostle Ulphilas, who had accomplished the feat of translating the Scriptures into their native tongue; but while a more refined faith had softened the manners of the part of the nation by which it had been embraced, it had unhappily created internal jealousies and divisions. Athanaric, the chief of the Pagans, advised his people to retreat into the wilds of the Carpathian mountains; Tridigern, who headed the Christian faction, pointed to the Danube and to the power of the empire beyond it, ruled as it was by a Christian sovereign, which had already received so many colonies of Goths and cherished them in its bosom. Under the guidance of Tridigern an immense multi-

tude presented themselves on the north bank of the Danube, amounting, it is said, to 200,000 warriors, with their wives and children, their cattle and baggage, and entreated permission to cross and establish themselves on Roman soil, in the plains of Mæsia.

Valens was at the time at Antioch, immersed in theological controversies, into which he had plunged late in life without training or knowledge, but in which he took a lively if not a discriminating interest. But he was also intent on watching the policy of the Persians beyond the Euphrates, and he was ill able to spare a detachment to restrain this armed multitude from forcing the passage of the Danube. It was necessary to concede, to temporise, and to trust to the future for opportunity either to utilise these importunate visitors, or to control and overpower them. The first object of the Roman government was to satisfy the Goths by promises, the next to postpone and evade the performance of them. It was arranged that the imperial fleet should transport the strangers across the river, but that the women and children should be conveyed first, and lodged in cities in the interior, as hostages for the peaceable conduct of the warriors who were to follow them. Ulphilas promised for them that their conversion should be completed, and that they should all embrace the Arian formula as it was held by the emperor himself. Meanwhile the affair was allowed to linger on, till the Goths began to suffer grievously from want of provisions. They thrust themselves into all the vessels they could collect on the banks; some crossed on boards and trunks of trees, many swam the stream, swelled as it was by the rains which had fallen. When at last they stood on the southern shore they found to their indignation that the Roman soldiery had made free with their women, and sold many of their children into servitude. But they were sore pressed by famine; they accepted the excuses that were proffered to them; and hastening to fulfil their part in the compact, vast numbers of them were baptised in the faith of the emperor, which their nation continued to retain long after the emperors had become again Catholic.

No sooner, however, were the Goths settled on the Roman territory than they determined to avenge the injuries they had suffered. They threw open the passage of the Danube to successive hordes of their countrymen, and soon found themselves strong enough to attack and defeat the imperial lieutenant Lupicinus at Marcianopolis in Mæsia. Valens now hastened from the East to confront them with all his forces. The inhabitants of Constantinople were in a state of

terror; and the Catholic party, which was the strongest among them, attributing their danger to the favour he had shown to heresy, assailed the emperor with stones as he traversed the streets. Valens was rash rather than bold. In his impatience to strike a blow he refused to await the arrival of Gratian, whose aid he had invoked. The barbarians, indeed, had reached Adrianople, within a hundred miles of his capital. Possibly he had no choice but to fight or to shrink behind his walls. The fortune of war, however, went against him. The imperial army was utterly routed; the emperor himself, Aug. 8,
A.D. 378. escaping from the field wounded, was burnt by the victors in the cabin in which he had taken refuge. The Goths had no means of laying siege to fortified places; they did not venture to make an attack upon Constantinople, but they spread themselves unopposed over Thrace and Macedonia, sacking and destroying towns and villages, till their career was arrested by the vigour and genius of Theodosius.

The barbarians, indeed, with all their rude valour, never proved themselves capable of conducting a campaign against able captains and disciplined battalions. The allies and mercenaries of the empire were themselves men of barbarian origin, endued with all the vigour of their race, and supplied at the same time with the superior arms and training of the Romans. Theodosius reduced the Goths to submission, and required them to defend the Danubian frontier, which they had already ravaged and depopulated. Under control as energetic as his own they might have continued useful dependents of the empire. But his successors were not men of the same mould. The line of division between the East and West, which had hitherto slightly fluctuated, was now finally drawn between the eastern and western Illyria. Before his premature death Theodosius had associated his eldest son Arcadius in the government of the East, and had already confided the West to Honorius, the younger. The one was not more than eighteen years of age, the other a mere child of eleven. The care of Arcadius devolved upon his minister Rufinus, who proved a traitor to his interests. Honorius was more fortunate. This stripling had been placed under the charge of the valiant Stilicho, a Vandal by birth, who had commanded the auxiliaries of his own nation, and after doing good service in the field had been intrusted with the conduct of negotiations with Persia. Stilicho continued to acquit himself with fidelity as well as valour. He had, indeed, little temptation to betray his trust; for he was himself married to Serena, the niece of his imperial patron, and his daughter

Maria was already betrothed to Honorius, who left the conduct of affairs entirely in his hands. His first care was to secure the provinces of Gaul and Britain, whence to draw an unfailing supply of soldiers for his legions. He checked the inroads of the barbarians beyond the Rhine and the Wall of Severus. He directed the strengthening of the fortresses which controlled the Suevi and Allemanni on the one frontier, and the Picts and Scots on the other. The remains of Roman strongholds still existing on the eastern coasts of Britain may be ascribed to the policy and vigour of Stilicho. He averted famine from the city by the armaments he sent to Africa to put down the revolt of Gildo, the faithless governor of Carthage. But he extended his care to the East also. He led the legions of Theodosius back to Constantinople, and defended Arcadius against the perils which were threatening him from the intrigues of Rufinus, whose assassination he compassed by the hands of his coadjutor Gainas. The character of

A.D. 395.

Rufinus has been condemned by the concurrent voice of all the historians, and Claudian, in some memorable verses, declares his fall sufficient to justify, even at that dark crisis, the ways of God to man. It was generally believed that the invasion of Greece by the Goths had been invited by that treacherous minister. The barbarians settled within the Danube had been again defrauded of their stipulated supplies. Once more they opened the passage of the river to their brethren beyond it, placed their united forces under the command of Alaricus (Al-ric, the universal king), who had led their contingent in the armies of Theodosius, and burst with a furious onslaught upon the fair regions to the south.

A.D. 396.

Leaving Constantinople on their left, they overran the open country of Macedonia, penetrated the undefended defile of Thermopylæ, and soon spread themselves through the plains and valleys of Greece. Thebes surrendered; Athens, according to some patriotic historians, was saved by the apparition of Achilles and Minerva. But devastation and ruin spread far and wide. The Goths were barbarian Christians, and felt the less repugnance at the destruction of the monuments of Pagan civilisation. Paganism thus stricken down in her decrepitude never rose again in the home of her flourishing adolescence. The invaders had effected a lodgment in the heart of the Peloponnesus before Stilicho could reach and check them. In the conflict which ensued the invaders were undoubtedly worsted; but their defeat, however magnified in the turgid verse of Claudian, cannot have been complete, for Alaric found means to gain

the gulf of Corinth, to transport no small remnant of his warriors across it, and to establish his position in Epirus beyond. The jealousy of Arcadius was now aroused. He became afraid of his own protector. He dismissed Stilicho, no doubt with many gifts and compliments, to Italy, and engaged Alaric to keep the gates of his territory against his brother and his brother's ministers in the West.

The Visigoths, or western Goths, the division of that people which acknowledged the sway of Alaric, had become a great power between the Danube and the Adriatic. Their restless ruler determined to extend his dominions. Acting now in his own name

A.D. 398. rather than as lieutenant of Arcadius, he mustered the whole force of his nation and made an irruption into Italy.

Crossing the plain of Lombardy, he presented himself before the imperial residence at Milan. Stilicho had rushed into Gaul to collect auxiliaries. Honorius was carried off to a place of safety in Ravenna, at an earlier period the port of the fleet of Augustus, but already involved by the recession of the sea in a bed of lakes and marshes, which rendered it almost impregnable. Stilicho summoned to his aid all the forces within reach, and denuded Britain of the single legion which defended it against the Picts. On his prompt return he threw himself into Milan, harassed and controlled and finally attacked the invader in his turn; and when he withdrew eastward followed on his track, overtook him at Pollentia, and inflicted upon him a mighty overthrow. The Goths retreated or fled. The Romans redoubled their blows, and gained a second victory at Verona. Alaric himself escaped with difficulty to the mountains, and Italy was thus signally delivered from the barbarians of the North in two desperate engagements, which might be likened to the

A.D. 403. victories of Marius over the Cimbri and the Teutones. Nor had Marius himself been properly a Roman. He was a

Volscian peasant of Arpinum; and his legions, too, were formed of mercenary levies from all the cities of Italy and her Gaulish dependency. The history of the Republic seemed to be repeating itself in the latter days of the Empire.

The last victory of Rome was appropriately celebrated by the last of her triumphs, and of the long series, not less, it is said, than three hundred in number, none perhaps has been so pompously described. The last of the Roman triumphs has been sung by the last of the Roman poets, and the stirring strains of Claudian not unfaithfully echo the trumpet-tones of Lucretius and Virgil. Honorius

rius, hidden away in his retreat at Ravenna, had entered upon his sixth consulship. He had sanctioned the repair of the walls of Rome, which had been undertaken as their last defence by the trembling citizens. After the victories of Stilicho he announced that he would enter his ancient capital in triumph. The city arrayed itself, as for the visit of Constantius, in all the splendour that was still left to it. The Palace of the Cæsars was furnished up for his reception, and the poet glorifies with enthusiasm the view which it commanded of so many hills crowned with temples, so many streets bridged by triumphal arches, and the famous paintings or sculptures of the overthrow of the giants beneath the roof of the Thunderer in the Capitol. Columns, statues, domes, and pinnacles all glittered with gold. The gods he declares themselves kept watch over their own shrines. The Senate assembled to salute their chief; and Victory herself, the 'winged deity' who had flown so often to and fro, was present in her own sacred abode. Theodosius, the father of the victorious consul, is celebrated as himself 'divine.' The whole tone of the poem is unmistakeably Pagan, and betrays no sense of the rivalry, much less of the supremacy, of any other religion. We must believe that, while all is coloured, there is much in this that is utterly untrue. We cannot suppose that Rome at that period of decline and abandonment could put forth any such show of gold and glitter; that she could present any such array of temples, even if the temples themselves were destitute of worshippers; nor is there more reason to suppose that the Image of Victory had been restored to the Senate-house by Honorius, than that Theodosius had received from the Senate the honours of apotheosis. But the picture is curious as representing the obstinacy with which the Pagans still shut their eyes to the facts around them, refusing to the last to acknowledge the religious revolution from which they shrank with so much horror. Yet Claudian himself dares not assert that the triumph ended in the offering of the victim to the Capitoline Jupiter. He conducts the emperor to the gates of the city, and points him out to the gaze of its matrons and daughters, preceded by the dreadful 'dragons' that fluttered on his standards, and surrounded by steel-clad squadrons of barbarian cavalry; but there he leaves him, and loses himself in a vague panegyric on the emperors who had trampled before him on the neck of the vanquished Ister, such as the great Aurelius, and the still greater Trajan.

Against these empty declamations of the Pagans may be set a fact of no slight significance, to show how real and deep was the im-

pression which Christianity had now made upon the conscience of the Roman people. The year 404 is famous as the accredited epoch of the abolition of the gladiatorial shows. It is true that a decree had been already launched against them as far back as the reign of Constantine, but this, like many other legislative enactments which had been directed by the Christian emperors against the religious usages of the Pagans (for it was in this light that Constantine chiefly regarded the shows), had exercised little or no effect on the practice. The populace still delighted in the amusement, regardless for the most part of its religious significance, while the increasing humanity and better taste of the class which was leavened with Christian sentiment revolted more and more against it. The critical moment had arrived when the government might prudently interfere. The impulse was given by the noble act of a monk named Telemachus, who rushed into the arena and in the name of Christ threw himself between the combatants. He was cut to pieces on the instant; but the spectators were smitten with compunction; the games were immediately suspended, and a stringent decree was promptly issued forbidding their revival. The Pagans might be reminded that, like Cicero and Seneca in earlier days, so within the last generation their accomplished sage Libanius had expressed his disgust at these inhuman entertainments; nevertheless, neither imperial decrees nor philosophic declamations extinguished the popular passion at a blow. An indignant Christian writer could still speak of the shows as existing fifty years later; but just at that period no doubt they finally expired.

The defeat of Alaric was not the last great service which Stilicho effected for Rome and Italy. The attack of the Gothic invader had, indeed, only been repulsed by the desperate expedient of withdrawing every Roman legion from the defence of the frontiers. The interior of Germany was boiling over with mingled hosts of Suevi and Allemanni, of Vandals and Alans, of Goths and Huns. A vast swarm of barbarians, among whom all these nations are enumerated, burst into Italy under a chief named Radagæsus, a rude Pagan, without even the varnish of a purer religious profession, who carried devastation among Christians and Pagans indiscriminately. The sufferings of Italy and the alarm at Rome exceeded any that Alaric had yet inflicted. The Pagans called aloud for revived ceremonies and redoubled sacrifices to avert the peril, and the Christians themselves wavered in their reliance on their holier faith. But Stilicho called his soldiers again to arms. If this was the crisis at which he

stripped the golden plates from the doors of the Capitol, the Pagans as well as the Christians might fairly have forgiven him. Immense exertions must have been required to equip the forces which should withstand an irruption of 200,000—or, as some computed, 400,000—barbarians. Radagæsus had occupied the hills of Fæsulæ, above Florence. Stilicho was enabled to hem his vast hordes within a large extent of country, reduced him there to the extremity of famine, and compelled him to accept a battle. The discipline of the imperial forces, under able leadership, was as usual triumphant. The barbarian chief was worsted and driven to surrender. The terms which were promptly granted him were as A.D. 406. promptly broken. Radagæsus was put to death, and his warriors, an infinite multitude, sold into slavery at the price of a single gold piece each.

But this victory, though it saved Rome and Italy, was of little avail for the general protection of the empire. The gates of Gaul had been opened, and there was no power again to close them. The barbarians rushed irresistibly into the Roman province, crossed the Vosges and the Cevennes, and finally penetrated the Pyrenees. The shadow of a rival emperor, in the person of another Constantine, was set up in Gaul and Britain; but whether the seat of power was occupied by a Roman provincial or by a German barbarian, the fairest regions of the West were lost to the sovereign who still occupied his throne at Milan or Ravenna. In the midst of this confusion our accounts of the proceedings of Stilicho are confused also. He is universally accused by the historians of abandoning the defence of the empire to the prosecution of guilty intrigues for his own advancement. The Pagan Zosimus and the Christian Orosius concur in their adverse judgment upon him. His faithful panegyrist Claudian has become silent. The Pagans regarded him as a persecutor of their opinions, a desecrater of their temples; he had burnt the books of the Sibyls. The Christians more unaccountably seem to have deemed him unfaithful to the Gospel which he professed, as harbouring the design of placing a son upon the throne who should betray it. The only open act they could inculcate was his attacking the Christian Alaric during the holy season of Easter. It seems that, by a curious turn in popular opinion, the Gothic heretic came to acquire some favour with the Christians as the conqueror of Rome and the real subverter of the Pagans, while the feeble Honorius, who through a long reign yielded in all things to the Church and its ministers, engaged their indulgence at least if not

their lively interest. It was reported, however, on all hands, that the victor of Pollentia and Fæsulæ, having secured the marriage of his son Eucherius with the daughter of Arcadius, who died at this moment, concerted with Alaric the means of seizing himself upon the thrones both of the East and the West, and that he postponed the defence of the empire to the prosecution of his treasonable conspiracy. The ear of Honorius, who still cowered behind the walls of Ravenna, had been gained by his minister Olympius. He was easily persuaded of his danger, and consented to the fall of his valiant protector. Olympius found means, it seems, to secure a preponderance with the army. Stilicho was betrayed by the desertion of his own veterans. He fled for refuge to a church at Ravenna, but was enticed away from his asylum and put to death. The emperor sanctioned the confiscation of his estates, the massacre of his son, and the prosecution of his friends and followers. It has been surmised that in their fate the poet Claudian was also included. 'Thus,' says the Christian fanatic Orosius, 'with little trouble and with the punishment of a small number, the churches of Christ and the faithful emperors were delivered and avenged. And then, after such an outgrowth of unprecedented blasphemies, followed that last and long-delayed chastisement of the guilty city. Alaric has come; he lays siege to Rome; he confounds, he storms it.'

CHAPTER LXXVI.

Alaric advances against Rome—Attempt to revive the Etruscan rites—Rome capitulates and pays a ransom to the Goths—Honorius persecutes the heretics—The people of Rome show favour to the Pagans—Alaric reduces Rome a second time, and sets up Attalus as emperor under him—He enters and plunders Rome, but respects the sanctuaries of the Christian churches—Death of Alaric and retreat of the Goths—Rome becomes completely Christian—Remarks on the moral effect of the fall of Rome—Augustine's 'City of God'—Corruption of the Christian Church.

STILICHO had perished in the spring of the year 408. As if the fall of the best of his generals had not sufficiently shaken the defences of the empire, Honorius allowed a decree to be issued at this moment discharging from the army every officer who still confessed the faith of the Pagans. It was in vain that they took the military oath now regularly imposed, and swore obedience to the emperor by God and Christ and the Holy Spirit, for some professed

Pagans did not scruple so to conform; they were now required to make a direct avowal of Christianity. Generides, the best remaining officer of the legions, stripped himself of the belt which marked his military rank, and retired from the service. Alaric had already descended from the Alps. He had left Honorius and Ravenna on his left, and was advancing direct to Rome, and the emperor's ministers may well have felt that this was not a moment to press a point of theology. The decree was withdrawn, and Generides resumed his command. But it was no longer a question of opposing the Gothic invader with arms. Honorius seems to have been content to secure his own person behind his walls and marshes. The citizens of Rome were in dismay. The ramparts of Aurelian, indeed, had been recently repaired; but they had no soldiers to man them, and they were totally incapable of rising in their own defence.

A curious incident followed. Certain Etruscans, it is said, flying before the advancing barbarians, entered the city. They spoke with fond regret of the long-neglected usages of their countrymen, and protested that by resorting to some of their ancient rites they had saved a little town from falling into the enemy's hands. They had evoked lightning from heaven, and thrown the invading hosts into confusion. Pompeianus, prefect of the city, lent a facile ear to this hopeful narrative. He opened the proscribed books of the pontiffs. He consulted the Roman bishop Innocent, the prelate who had succeeded to the great Ambrose of Milan in respect and authority among the believers. The bishop hesitated; he would, indeed, allow the Etruscans to take such measures as they themselves judged expedient, but they must do so privately. They replied that their rites must be performed in public, or they would be ineffectual; the Senate must mount the Capitol in solemn pomp, the sacrifices must be offered with the accustomed ceremonies in the accustomed place. We hear no more of how Innocent comported himself. The Pagan historian declares that the senators themselves shrank from this bold assertion of Paganism, the Christian that they actually assisted at the impious rites, which proved of course utterly unavailing. It is plain that both the one and the other party sought to justify from its own point of view the doom which quickly fell upon the guilty city; but which of them gave the true account it is impossible to say.

Rome could make no resistance, and no aid came from the miserable court of Ravenna. Honorius was now in favour neither

with Christian nor with Pagan, but the adherents of the ancient faith seem to have been in the ascendant, when they gratified their revenge upon Serena, who had provoked their gods by stripping a collar of pearls from the image of the venerable Rhea. Perhaps they thought to propitiate Alaric by slaying the widow of Stilicho. But the king of the Goths was no violent or bloodthirsty barbarian. He was politic and greedy of money. How else should he support his mighty host of warriors, which was a nation in arms? He made no furious attack upon the city, but patiently waited till she should succumb to pestilence and famine. The day was not distant. A large and impoverished population was soon reduced to extremity. The Christians exercised their charity to the utmost, but their charity was exhausted. At last the Romans sued for mercy, and offered ransom. Alaric's demands were exorbitant. They threatened him with the despair of their enormous multitude. 'The thicker the hay,' he exclaimed derisively, 'the easier to mow it.' When he at last named his lowest terms they were struck with dismay. 'What, then, would you leave us?' they muttered. 'Your lives,' was the only reply he vouchsafed them.

The price of Rome, as particularly detailed by the Pagan Zosimus, was 5,000 pounds of gold, 30,000 of silver, 4,000 silken robes, 3,000 pieces of scarlet cloth, 3,000 pounds of pepper. Of these the gold and silver may have equalled 350,000*l.* of our money. The silk and the spice were no doubt very valuable. Yet on the whole the amount, if truly represented, may tend to moderate our ideas of the wealth and population of the city at this period of its decline. The ransom of Paris exacted by the Prussians, five milliards of francs, seems to have been about four hundred times greater. The gilding of the roof of the Capitoline temple had no doubt vastly exceeded it. The payment appears, however, to have taxed its resources to the utmost. 'It was impossible,' says the same historian, 'to discharge this terrible demand by a rate upon the citizens. Then it was that the hateful Genius who determines human affairs impelled the magistrates to crown our misfortunes by spoiling the images of the gods of their ornaments. Their rites, indeed, had been already abolished; the statues themselves had been deprived of their life and power. But the ruin of

A.D. 408.

Rome required yet a further sacrifice. Not only were the statues despoiled of their gold and precious stones, all that were of gold and silver were themselves melted in the fire. Among them was one of Courage, of Virtue, as the Romans call her; with her

disappeared from Rome all that remained of honour and of valour. The men who were adepts in sacred lore announced but too truly the ruin that should follow.'

Alaric meanwhile had thrown open his camp to fugitive slaves, and as many as 40,000 are said to have taken refuge with him. This number, considering the licence of the moment and the ruin of so many families, does not tend to raise our idea of the actual amount of the population. It is clear that the power of Rome was reduced to the lowest ebb; and it seems that at this crisis of her degradation the recollection of her former greatness inspired her people with some misgivings at the abandonment of her ancient faith. Olympius, a decided favourer of the Christians, who had robbed the heathen temples without mercy, fell by a court intrigue. The prohibition of a Pagan profession was more or less relaxed. Honorius turned from the Pagans to the Jews and heretics, against whom he enacted decrees more vehement than before. But adversity did not teach him to deal openly and loyally with his triumphant enemy. Alaric advanced again upon Rome the year following. He passed round the walls and seized upon the port of Ostia. The supplies of the city were at once cut A.D. 409. off. She knew too well what must be her fate, and promptly opened her gates. The Goth had now changed his policy. Instead of demanding a second ransom he proclaimed a rival emperor. His minion Attalus had been hitherto a Pagan; he now submitted, indeed, to Arian baptism, but at the same time he professed openly to favour the Pagan faction. Such, it seems, was still the strength of that party that Attalus could deem it politic to make one of its leaders captain of the prætorians, another prefect of the city, and a third consul. Lampadius, Marcianus, and Tertullus, such were their names, were all friends or followers of the Pagan champion Symmachus. Great, so at least we are assured by Pagan authority, was the delight of the citizens when Tertullus assumed the office of Chief Pontiff in addition to the consulship. They fondly believed that all the noblest and most ancient families were at least secretly devoted to the faith of Romulus and Numa. The Anicii, or Annii, alone, it was asserted, took no part in the general satisfaction; the Anicii had been the first of the old aristocracy to accept the Christian belief under Constantine; yet even the Anicius of this day appears, on the unquestionable authority of inscriptions, to have erected an altar to the Genius of his house. Such are the strange contradictions which perplex the inquirer into the progress

of the Church at Rome. But Attalus, after all, had gone too far or too fast. His patron Alaric had withdrawn to his old station between Rome and Ravenna. The foes of the new emperor called aloud for help. Heraclian, prefect or consul of Africa, forbade the export of corn to the city, and the populace speedily rose in its alarm and drove away its feeble ruler with execrations and insults. Attalus sought refuge with Alaric; and the Goth, though he required him to renounce the throne he was incapable of maintaining, appeared himself a third time before the devoted city. An early prophecy had assured him that he should enter Rome; a voice still constantly sounded in his ears, saying, 'On, and destroy the city!'

The Romans had extorted from Honorius the futile succour of six cohorts, which at this time could hardly have amounted to 1,000 men. They closed their barriers and pretended to defend them, but the Salarian gate was opened at night by treachery, and the barbarians entered the city on the 24th day of August, A.D. 410, exactly 800 years from its conquest by the Gauls. Alaric was not a Brennus. He was not passionately bent on slaughter or destruction. Fierce as he was, he was no heathen barbarian. He made no massacre of the inhabitants; he caused no wilful conflagration in their streets. But his greedy warriors demanded pillage, and for six days the wealth of the great city was abandoned to her conquerors. Doubtless the sack of Rome was accompanied with violence and cruelty. Doubtless men were slain in the defence of their homes or their families. Women were dishonoured. Concealed treasures were drawn to light by threats and tortures. Resistance if attempted provoked further violence, and some houses and temples were given to the flames; but the Christians, for their part, ascribed such catastrophes more generally to lightning and the divine judgment thereby evinced, which had at last fallen upon the Babylon of the Apocalypse. They could not pretend, indeed, that the believers had escaped unharmed in the general disaster, as from another Jerusalem, but they declared, not perhaps without justice, that the instrument of God's vengeance, himself a believer, though a heretic, had stoutly interfered for their protection. Alaric respected the churches, and within their sacred walls the Christians found shelter and safety. The right of asylum was extended even to the Pagans who sought refuge at the Christian altars. Among the edifices which fell a prey to the flames the churches of St. Peter and St. Paul escaped scatheless. Even the treasures of the sacred edifices, their rich furniture of plate and jewels, remained

intact. A furious plunderer was overawed, in one instance at least, by the sanctity of a helpless virgin, who placed the vessels she guarded under the protection of the Apostles. Another who offered her life to preserve her honour was led by the remorseful barbarian to the door of the sanctuary, and a gift of gold forced upon her. Marcella, the aged friend of St. Jerome, was beaten and scourged with a view to extort her reputed treasures, which she had actually expended in charity ; but she, too, softened the heart of the oppressor, and was led by his kindly hand to the same asylum, the church dedicated to St. Paul.

It was well, perhaps, that Innocent, the bishop of Rome, was absent from the city at this crisis. He had betaken himself to Ravenna, with other chief personages of the city, to implore the effectual assistance of the emperor. His spiritual office gave him the first place in the regard of the citizens, and though he occupied no magistracy, he might have been held accountable to the assailant for the exercise of his influence upon them. His high courage or his sense of duty might have impelled him to protract a hopeless resistance, and the jealousy of the heretics might have been aroused by the pointed denunciations of the leader of the orthodox believers. The absence of Innocent may have spared Rome some aggravation of her sufferings. The barbarian chief was, however, soon satisfied with his triumph. He quitted Rome within twelve days, nor did he trouble himself to impose any ruler or government upon the city. His people were impatient for plunder elsewhere. He led them through the centre and south of Italy, where they committed terrible ravages. The nobles whose palaces had been rifled in the capital now witnessed the devastation of their villas and estates in the country. Their families were scattered, their slaves released ; the wealthiest of the senators were reduced to ruin and destitution. Vast numbers of them fled beyond sea. Many of the Christians betook themselves to the opposite shores of Africa, and found hospitable entertainment among their flourishing communities in that populous province. But they brought with them, it is said, an incurable spirit both of worldliness and levity, and the demeanour of the fugitives from the sack of Rome caused grave scandal in the bosom of a purer and simpler society. Alaric was a great destroyer, but he had no genius for building up anything. He roamed through Italy restless and aimless. It is said that he meditated a further onslaught upon Sicily, and even Africa. But he was suddenly cut off by illness at Consentia, at the farthest extremity of the penin-

sula. The last order issued by the conqueror of Rome was that his body should be laid beneath the channel of the river Busentinus, that no man might discover the exact spot of his burial and expose his glorious remains to indignity.

After Alaric's death the tide of invasion ebbed backwards. As the Goths withdrew it is probable that many of the Romans returned to the city. But the Pagans were utterly abashed. They cowered under the smoking ruins of their houses, and if they retained the impressions of their old faith, now disgraced and discredited, hardly ventured to avow them. Their temples remained empty, or fell into the hands of their opponents. The laws against their ceremonial, which had been often issued but still remained in abeyance, became now a living force. Henceforth the power of Paganism was entirely broken, and the indications which still occasionally meet us of its continued existence are rare and trifling. Christianity stepped into its deserted inheritance. The Christians occupied the temples, transforming them into churches. The Christian priesthood received, and again grew rich upon, the religious offerings of the wealthy and the charitable. The world in general bowed to their announcement that the sack of Rome was the judgment of God upon the Pagan world, and beheld in the greatest of secular calamities a convincing proof of the Gospel revelation.

The Christian apologists of an earlier generation had accepted the imperial dominion of the great city as a principle of the divine government. The rule of the emperor was to them a law of Providence. The world, in their view, was Pagan, unbelieving, idolatrous to the core; it stood in direct opposition to the society of the Christians, or the Church, which enjoyed the promises of the future, but had no share in the enjoyments of the present life. The ruler of this Pagan society must, they deemed, be necessarily a Pagan. His place in God's creation was to represent the secular life as contrasted with the spiritual. He was to maintain the empire, which secured the peace of mankind and gave scope to the progress of Christian sentiment within it, and, above all, to maintain the grandeur and solid strength of the imperial city, which was the appointed type of the empire and of the world in general. Tertullian, in the third century, never imagined that an emperor would be converted to the faith. Lactantius, in the fourth, would have been shocked at the idea that Rome could ever cease to be the imperial ruler of the nations. He could not fail, indeed, even in the palmy age of Con-

stantine, to see that she was environed with perils, and to apprehend, perhaps, that her days were numbered ; but beyond the fall of Rome he could see nothing, he could imagine no future. He was convinced that with the end of Rome would come the end of the world. As years went on, and these perils thickened, this was the idea which impressed itself most strongly upon the minds of the Christians. Here at last the adherents of the two faiths were in accord. Both believed that Rome was necessary to the world, and would last as long as the world lasted, and perish with it.

No doubt both Pagan and Christian were oppressed with sad misgivings as they saw the swarms of barbarians closing round them, their emperors fled, their legions withdrawn and scattered. But the Pagans, for their part, still clung to their faith in Rome herself, the dearest and nearest of all their divinities. Her career throughout had been plainly Providential. Her gods had never failed her. All her defeats, all her disasters, had redounded ultimately to her triumph, and her triumph had been extended over three continents, and protracted through twelve centuries. From age to age oracles had pronounced her eternal, and her grandeur, her wealth, her inexhaustible resources were all manifest tokens of her eternity. Accordingly, even under the tyranny of a Constantine, a Theodosius, and an Honorius they rallied confidently again and again. They took courage to defend the gods who had so signally protected them, and refused to surrender the last hope, however faint, of a triumphant reaction in their favour. But of this faith they required an outward and visible sign. They had looked to Rome herself as the last pledge of the truth of their shattered creed. The fall of Rome extorted from their lips a wail of disappointment and dismay, such as never, perhaps, has been heard in the world before or since, but with the fall of Rome their creed was broken to atoms.

The Christians, on the other hand, while still expecting that the city and the world would perish together, could cherish other hopes and further consolations. They could not have the same passionate attachment to Rome, 'drunk with the blood of the saints,' as was natural to the Pagans. Their instinct did not point to the eternal duration of any monument of mere worldly greatness. From the first they were familiar with the expectation of an impending consummation of all things. The crisis had been already long delayed ; the Apostles had expected but had not seen it, and generation after generation had still lived and died expecting it ; but the time was not yet. As the fall of Rome seemed more and more plainly ap-

proaching this expectation grew keener than ever; but now, perhaps, as the outward condition of the Church was happier, the expectation was less joyous and triumphant than of yore. The Christian, however, could look beyond the fall of Rome, even though the world should perish with it. He believed in another city, 'not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;' to the believer whose faith was firm and lively the vision of the City of God was far more than a compensation for the impending dissolution of Rome.

But Rome was now sacked, ruined, discrowned, depopulated, yet the world did not perish. 'A great destiny had been accomplished; a great destiny was about to commence.' The people began to return and repair their fallen habitations. The destruction was found to be less overwhelming than in their despair they had imagined. Though never again to be the queen of the nations, Rome might yet continue to be one of the greatest of provincial cities. Then it was that the Christians stepped boldly to the front, and Augustine published in his 'City of God' what may be considered as the manifesto of the Church against the worship of the City of Man, by which the Pagans had been so fatally beguiled. In this elaborate treatise he first soothes the excited feelings of the Christian sufferers, pointing out that the calamity they have endured may be taken as a chastisement, a warning, and a trial. He then reminds his Pagan brethren, by a review of their past history, how vain was their notion that Rome was protected by any special Providence; how often and how signally she had been afflicted by famine and pestilence, by foreign enemies and by civil dissensions. And lastly he invites all mankind to accept the revelation of the divine Scriptures, which declare that their true and eternal city is not Rome at all, but the God's own city, the spiritual commonwealth of which all believers are members, represented upon earth by the Church of Christ. He thus strikes the keynote of all Christian apologies in after-time. The Pagans can make no reply. They have lost all heart and all faith. The tradition of their ancient superstitions, driven from the cities and chief resorts of men, still lingers in the fields and the villages. The last vestiges of their worship still appear here or there faintly and dubiously for centuries; but the old living faith of Jupiter and Saturn, of Astarte and Mithras, has ceased to be a power in the world from this time for ever.

The triumph, however, of Christianity was not unalloyed. We dare not congratulate ourselves upon it as on a pure victory of truth over falsehood. It must be allowed that the apparent success of the

Gospel was gained in a great degree by the surrender of the distinctive purity of the Gospel. At an earlier period, when many of the doctors and preachers of the Church had been themselves converted to the faith from the schools of the philosophers, it had been usual with them to recommend it to their former associates as a higher revelation in metaphysical and moral science. Doubtless Justin and Clement and Origen had made some sacrifice of the simplicity of the Gospel in their earnest endeavour to smooth the way to its reception among the more enlightened classes of Pagan society. The danger into which their successors fell lay in another direction. The Church in the fourth century had to attract and to retain the masses of the population. It allowed itself to make in turn too large a concession to their vulgar prejudices. The Pagan multitude would never, perhaps, have surrendered to the Christian faith, from which they held so long aloof, had not the Christian Churches been encouraged to offer them an outward pomp and ceremonial, adopted mainly from the Pagan itself. The doctrines of the Gospel were merged, its severe and lofty precepts were involved, in a parade of lights, incense, vestments, pictures, images, and votive offerings, which made the passage from nominal Paganism to a Christianity hardly less nominal, easy, and imperceptible. It can be shown but too plainly that the readiest way to secure the transfer of a Pagan temple to the Christian services was to place it under the invocation of the Saints and of the Virgin Mary. There were not wanting high-souled puritans in that day who protested against this dangerous trifling; but their voice was too generally overruled. The patrons of a corrupt reaction were honoured and magnified. Vigilantius was denounced; Jerome was canonized.

No system, indeed, of moral and religious teaching could fail to be vulgarized and degraded by the adhesion to it of the mass of weak and vicious humanity. The mass of the Pagan world at this period was peculiarly debased. The Greek and Roman races were, in fact, morally exhausted. They had lost their elasticity, and all power of intellectual rejuvenescence. The trial to which the spirit of the Gospel was now subjected was indeed a fearful one. The Church has never yet thoroughly leavened the body of her nominal adherents. Nevertheless, she has done enough to vindicate her claim to be the best regenerator of society. She has conquered for herself a people of stronger moral fibre in the barbarians from whom modern society has since sprung, and has moulded them to a higher sense of morals and religion than any before them. Baffled as she

still is at every turn by the inherent corruption of human nature, she has nevertheless succeeded in setting up a standard of truth and justice, of purity and mercy, to which all men revert on every emergency, which all men profess at least to regard with respect and acquiescence. None can deny that since the fall of Rome and of Roman superstition the world generally has recognised a holier moral rule, and embraced a loftier conception of man's nature and destiny. The fall of Rome is still the greatest event in all secular history.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

The Western provinces become generally independent of the empire—Roman culture lingers in Gaul and Spain—The Visigoths and Burgundians settle in Gaul—Revolt and fall of Heraclianus in Africa—Kingdom of the Visigoths in the North of Spain—Honorius is supported by his general Constantius, whose son, Valentinian III., succeeds to the empire under the agency of his mother Placidia—Aetius the patrician, 'the last of the Romans'—Treason of Count Bonifacius—Genseric and the Vandals invited into Africa, which they subdue—Attila and the Huns invade Gaul, and are repulsed by Aetius—Battle of Chalons, A.D. 451—Massacre at Cologne—Attila invades Italy—Leo the pope saves Rome—Death of Attila—Valentinian assassinates Aetius—Maximus emperor—The empress Eudoxia invites Genseric to attack Italy—Sack of Rome by the Vandals, A.D. 455—Avitus emperor—Ricimer the Sueve bestows the purple first on Majorianus, afterwards on Severus—The empire now limited to Italy only—The emperor Anthemius supposed to have leant towards the Pagans—Ricimer captures Rome for the third time, A.D. 472—He makes Glycérius emperor, and lastly Romulus, surnamed Augustulus—The barbarian Odoacer extinguishes the empire of the West, A.D. 476.

WE have reviewed the history of Rome from her rise and progress to her decline and fall. The vast empire which she has acquired has been lost to her. A rival capital rules one-half of her ancient dominions. The emperors of the West have ceased to reside in her, and make her the centre of their authority. What remains of the empire of the West is ruled from a court at Milan, or now more commonly at Ravenna. Rome herself has been entered and sacked by the barbarians. Italy has been overrun by an irresistible invader. It remains in the power of the Goths to determine whether the city of the Cæsars shall become the capital of a new barbarian empire, or be abandoned to the contempt of the world and the progress of natural decline. But the influence of the name of Rome has survived her intrinsic power. She has yet another turn in her career

to experience before the period of ancient history comes to a close, and Europe enters upon the development of new ideas and new political combinations.

Alaric, at his death, left the great Gothic host encamped at the southern extremity of Italy, where it had been just baffled in an attempt to cross over into Sicily. The chiefship of the nation descended from him to Ataulphus, his wife's brother, by military election. This man was no vulgar barbarian. So deeply was he impressed with the dignity of the Roman government, and the complexity of the institutions wherewith it sustained the civilization of the age, that he shrank from quartering upon Italy a swarm of savage conquerors, and refrained from establishing his own camp in Rome. 'There was a time,' he is reported to have said, 'when I aspired to make the ancient capital of the world my own capital, to convert Romania into a Gothia, to call myself no longer Ataulphus, but Cæsar Augustus; but I have discovered that the barbarians can never be subjected to civil institutions, my Goths can never be made Romans. Society shall not perish. I will restore the Roman Empire, and protect but not rule it.' He was inspired, it is said, with this noble resolution by Placidia, the daughter of Theodosius, who had fallen into the hands of the invaders at Rome, and with whom he had united himself in marriage. The resolution itself betokens the power which the great city exercised over the imaginations of mankind, even of the foreigner and the barbarian, and their strong conviction that there was something transcendent and sacred in its authority, with which no other could be put in competition. Ataulphus withdrew from Italy, and set up his throne at Barcino, in Spain, and more constantly at Narbo, in Southern Gaul. He established a permanent kingdom of the Visigoths on the coast of the Mediterranean; but he surrendered Rome to the Roman emperor, as its legitimate sovereign, and while he styled himself king of the Visigoths did not pretend to withdraw the conquered Romans from their allegiance to Honorius, as emperor over both himself and them. He regarded the wretched Attalus as an instrument and a failure, and contemptuously thrust him aside, first bringing him away with him to Barcino, and afterwards giving him up to Honorius. The kingdom of the Visigoths rudely foreshadowed the fiefs of the feudal vassals of a later age. It sprang from the same Teutonic soil, and was due, perhaps, to the same cast of political ideas, from which so much of the polity of modern Europe has actually derived its shape and character.

Thus the history of ancient Rome enters upon a new phase, brief, indeed, but offering at least for a moment some promise of dignity and prosperity. The Christian panegyrists of Honorius speak in glowing terms of the revival of his authority and power; and though the colouring of these sectarians may be liable to just suspicion, it would really seem that the empire after its recent degradation did enjoy at least a partial revival. The influence over men's minds which she lost by the withdrawal of the sun of imperial splendour she regained by the enhanced authority of her bishops, who now reigned almost supreme in the city, over a population very generally devoted to them. The dignity of the pope of Rome became the more eminent from the eclipse under which the Church and its rulers suffered in the western provinces, overcome as they now were by successive swarms of barbarians, some heathen and others heretical. They seem to have framed their ecclesiastical policy with a steady view to the eventual aggrandisement of their see; but the rise of the Papacy, which is perhaps the most marked feature of the century, was still more due to their actual position, as spiritual heirs to a secular power which had abdicated its actual responsibilities. The history of modern Europe was about to be inaugurated by a great spiritual revival, of which Rome was to be once more the centre.

Modern Rome was about to be born; but its birth does not lie within our purview. We may return for a moment to the state of the western provinces before we cast a glance upon the fate of the Western Empire itself. The Visigoths, under Ataulphus, established some kind of regular government in the north of Spain and the south of Gaul; but ruder hordes of Sueves and Alans, Vandals and Burgundians, overran the greater part of both those extensive regions, their chiefs ever shifting their camps from one quarter to another, engaged first in the plunder of the natives, and when that was exhausted in conflict with one another. The provincials who were now generally known by the name of Romans, and who had, indeed, adapted their speech and manners to the Roman type for many generations, found themselves abandoned by the emperor, and were not ill-pleased, perhaps, for the most part, to accept the rule of their new masters, which might be lighter, and could hardly be heavier, than the fiscal tyranny of the imperial administration. The best literature of the day still flourished in Gaul and Spain. Ausonius and Rutilius, Prosper, Avitus and Salvian did honour to the one country, Orosius and Prudentius to the other. The barbarians

were not insensible to the charms of poetry and eloquence; they were captivated by the luxuries of Roman society; they were awed by the strength and subtilty of Roman jurisprudence; they embraced with peculiar readiness the conceptions of municipal government established in the provinces. Whether they brought with them a rudimentary system of law and politics of their own, as their descendants of the present day somewhat boldly contend, or whether they simply adopted the principles of Roman society around them, they showed at least remarkable aptitude for social and civic life. But as yet they allowed themselves no repose to make progress in the arts of peace. While paying for the most part a nominal acknowledgment to the imperial sovereign at Ravenna, they exercised all the rights of sovereignty freely among themselves, and it was only by purchasing their services, and employing them one against another, that he could prevent them from settling down into established and permanent governments.

While the barbarians were thus spreading themselves as it were in a thin layer over the surface of the general population, and acknowledging the nominal supremacy of the titular emperor at Ravenna, there arose various usurpers among the provincials themselves, who assumed the purple, and suffered themselves to be proclaimed, each in a different corner of the West, emperors, not of Britain or Gaul or Spain, but of Rome. Thus Gratianus was proclaimed emperor in Britain, but was speedily supplanted by Constantinus, who crossed the straits in the year 407, and after receiving some adhesions from the soldiery in Gaul, passed rapidly into Spain. This success, however rapid, was but momentary. Honorius was able to send against him an officer named Constantius, who captured him at Arles, and sent him to his master, by whom he was put to death, together with his son Julianus. It is mentioned that in his last extremity he had hastily taken holy orders, but this device did not save him. He had shown, it was remarked, no religious scruples himself, for he had stripped the monk's cowl and gown from another son, Constans, in order to invest him with the purple. Constans was slain by an officer of his own named Gerontius, and Gerontius in his turn was overpowered by Constantius. Gerontius
A.D. 411.
had set up a new emperor in Spain named Maximus, who maintained for some years a precarious position in the midst of the Romans and barbarians, but fell at last into the hands of Honorius. To these pretenders may be added Jovinus, a Roman magnate of the country of the Arverni in Gaul, who assumed the diadem at

Moguntiacum on the Rhine. In 411 this man was said to have formed a fleeting alliance with Ataulphus, and to have invited him into Gaul. But the king of the Visigoths, who could hardly have needed his invitation or his alliance, soon came in conflict with him, took him prisoner, and sent him in chains to Dardanus, the Roman prefect, for there was still an imperial prefect with some shadow of authority residing at Narbo. Jovinus is said to have also

A.D. 415.

invited the Burgundians to settle in the eastern district to which their name still attaches. These intruders, however, continued after his death to acknowledge Honorius as their emperor. To these usurpers may be added the count Heraclianus in Africa, the same who had driven Attalus from Rome in the interest of the emperor at Ravenna, but who at a later period pretended to make himself independent, and even attempted a descent upon the coast of Italy. Heraclianus is said to have put to sea with a fleet of 3,500 vessels, a statement which may fairly be pronounced incredible; but his armament, however vast, was attacked and overpowered by another stronger if not more numerous, under the count Marinus, and he himself soon perished by assassination on his return to Carthage.

The kings of the barbarians were retained in the service of the empire by subsidies of corn or money. The court of Ravenna heedlessly broke faith with Ataulphus, and the Visigoths straightway gave Burdigala to the flames, pillaged many other cities, and made havoc of the rich provinces of southern Gaul. Constantius was unable to defend them, but he succeeded in tempting the barbarian to carry his arms into Spain, where he found the Sueves and the Vandals opposed to him. He soon afterwards perished by the hand of one of his own nation. The Visigoths raised a warrior of the royal race named Wallia on their bucklers, thereby adopting him as their chief. Their new leader was baffled in an attempt to transport his people across the straits into Africa, but he continued to wage war against the various tribes that overran the peninsula. The conquest of Spain by the Romans had occupied 200 years, and now, after a repose of unexampled duration, the country was given over to a series of contests which lasted through almost as long a period, before the kingdom of the Visigoths was finally established on the ruins of the Suevic dominion throughout Galicia, Asturia, and the other northern provinces. The Vandals had settled themselves in the south, and have attached their name to the modern Andalusia; but they too were united with or absorbed into the

stronger blood of the race of Alaric or Ataulphus. From the middle of the fifth century the Roman empire was irrecoverably lost throughout the Iberian peninsula.

On the death of Ataulphus, Wallia sent back Placidia to the court at Ravenna. The emperor gave her to his loyal general Constantius, and her son by this second marriage succeeded to Honorius when still a mere stripling, with the title of Valentinian III. The reign of Honorius had been the A.D. 423.

longest but one of the whole imperial series. He came to the throne as a child, and though he never seemed to grow out of childhood, he counted thirty-seven years of empire. His character was utterly insignificant; he heard the news of the loss of one province after another with an inane jest; he had been found in one of the crises of his career amusing himself with his poultry. It was this insignificance which saved him. Bold usurpers and valiant pretenders fell by revolt or assassination; but legitimate idiocy lay secure under the shield of its counts and prefects. Honorius had been compelled by his sister to associate with him her husband Constantius, and to adopt their son, but Constantius died soon after. Honorius himself did not long survive, and Theodosius II., the emperor of the East, did not refuse to recognise the young Valentinian as heir to the throne of Ravenna. Joannes, the secretary of the late emperor, attempted to seize upon the governments, and invited the Huns to his assistance. But their time was not yet come, and they failed to give him their support. The adventurer was delivered up to Placidia, who, acting boldly and promptly, put him to death and secured her son's inheritance.

That inheritance had, indeed, dwindled to a narrow span. Gaul and Spain, as we have seen, had been lost. Britain had been nominally recovered, but the presidiary legions had been withdrawn, and the province was unable to defend itself against the barbarians who pressed upon it by sea and land. Illyria and Pannonia were constantly overrun by the Goths. Africa, which had fallen back to its allegiance after the defeat of Heraclian, was about to be wrested from the empire by a barbarian conqueror. Placidia had assumed the regency at Ravenna, but the support of her son's throne was chiefly entrusted to the arms of two illustrious senators, the patrician Aetius, and the consul Bonifacius. Of these Aetius has received the title of 'last of the Romans;' he was, indeed, a Scythian by birth, as Stilicho had been a Vandal. He was the last leader of the Roman armies, but these armies were

almost wholly composed of barbarian mercenaries; he gained the last Roman victory, but it was a victory which availed nothing for the restoration of the empire. Of the origin of Bonifacius we have no knowledge. He seems to have acquired the esteem of St. Augustine, and he governed Africa loyally till he was traduced by his crafty rival and recalled by Placidia. He was easily made to believe that this recall was a prelude to his execution, and unrestrained, as we are told, by the counsel of Augustine, called upon the Vandals in Spain to protect him.

Genseric was reigning in Bætica. He promptly obeyed the summons, and led his hosts across the Mediterranean in quest of the plunder which had tempted both Alaric and Wallia

A.D. 429.

before him. Meanwhile Boniface had been made aware of the deception practised upon him, and resolved with desperate fidelity to defend his province to the utmost. He maintained the contest single-handed for more than a year. The court of Ravenna was thus enabled to send succours, and two brave officers, Aspar and Marcianus, fought strenuously by his side; but the struggle was unavailing. The barbarians overcame all resistance, and at the end of five years Valentinian made them a formal cession of the whole territory from the Atlas to the Syrtis. Genseric was not yet satisfied. The vessels in which he had effected the trajet constituted a formidable fleet, with which he mastered the great islands of the

A.D. 435.

Mediterranean, and made descents upon the more distant coasts of Italy and Greece. He defied and harassed at once both the Eastern and the Western empire, and raised the Ostrogoths against the one and the Visigoths against the other. Finally he entered into relations of alliance with the still more formidable power of the Huns.

This terrible people has been already mentioned in the account of the great Gothic irruption. They had come from the East, and had pressed with irresistible weight upon the nations bordering on the Danube, and finally driven a large portion of them across it. Since that era they had continued to occupy its northern bank, where they had dominated over the remnant of the Ostrogoths, the Gepidæ and Heruli, but their incursions had been for the most part directed against the eastern regions of the empire, or the countries still further east beyond it. On the death of their king, Rugilas, about the same time as that of Honorius, his two sons, Attila and Bleda, were recognised as the leaders of these Scythian wanderers.

Attila, or, as the German legends style him, Etzel, the most

illustrious of barbarian conquerors, was held in horror, not by the Greeks and Romans only, but also by the Goths and all the other tribes which had issued from the North, and settled themselves in the Roman territories before him. He was reputed the most ferocious of the slayers and plunderers in whose footsteps he now trod. His course was everywhere marked by blood and fire, and he made no pretence of setting up any habitations or institutions of his own. His abode was a stockade on the banks of the Theiss, in Hungary. He never cared to construct a city, a palace, or a castle. He announced himself as the exterminator of the nations, and delighted to call himself 'the Scourge of God.' His ravages extended far and wide; but after vanquishing the lieutenants of Theodosius, the Eastern emperor, and imposing a tribute upon him, he turned for a time northward, and occupied himself with attacking the tribes on the Elbe and the Baltic, with crossing the Don and the Volga, and making incursions upon the Tartars. When, however, the Byzantine court ventured to withhold its stipulated payment, he rushed back furiously to the Danube, and overran Thrace and Illyria, with the destruction, it is said, of seventy cities. Theodosius hastily recalled the forces he had sent against Genseric. But to little purpose. He lost Africa, and he did not regain the right bank of his frontier river.

The emperors of the East and West now united in negotiations with the irresistible barbarian. The reception which Attila gave their envoys in the centre of his forests is one of the most striking incidents of the history which traces the long collision of the North with the South of Europe. Among various attempts to soothe the wrath of the barbarian, Honoria, the sister of Valentinian, is said to have offered herself to him as a bride, but the emperor forbade or evaded the unworthy sacrifice. Attila was at last diverted from attacking the empire, and preferred, perhaps at the instigation of Genseric, to throw himself upon the Visigoths in Gaul. He pretended to take the part of the Franks, whom this people had overthrown; but when the Roman general Aetius appeared as the defender of the Visigoths, Franks, Burgundians, and Romans all flocked to his standard. The ravages of the Huns combined every nationality against them. Attila crossed the Rhine at Strasburg, and marked his course into the centre of the province with terrible devastation. Aureliani, or Orleans, shut its gates and determined, at the preaching of its bishop, Agnanus, to resist to the utmost. Aetius arrived to its rescue. The Huns,

A.D. 450.

wasted by the long blockade, retreated, but the avenging host overtook them beyond Catalauni. or Chalons on the Marne, and defeated them with tremendous slaughter. Such, at least, was the exulting assertion of the Roman writers, and the victory deserves no doubt to be celebrated as decisive of the fate of Europe. But Attila, though beaten, was hardly routed. He effected his retreat from Gaul with a large unbroken force, and carried off great multitudes of captives. The reputed massacre of the 11,000 virgins at Cologne is a fignent or a blunder; but there is reason to believe that a large number of these wretches, old and young, male and female, were then and there slaughtered by him.

A.D. 451. The resources of Attila were as vigorous as ever. In the following year he demanded the hand of Honoria, and, on the refusal which he invited, led another host of barbarians into Italy. He entered the peninsula from the side of Illyria, sacked and destroyed Aquileia, Padua, Verona, and other places, and drove the trembling fugitives into the islands of the Veneti. Here at last they found themselves secure; here they finally settled, and here in the course of years grew up the city of Venice, the Carthage of the middle ages. The Huns now spread themselves over the Cisalpine; they met with little or no resistance, but they languished under the maladies of the climate, and while they launched the fiercest threats against the South, refrained from enforcing them with more active exertions. The court of Ravenna was paralysed with terror. Aetius was still far away. But there was yet one man at Rome who deserves more than any other to be called the last of the Romans; no warrior, no statesman, but a Christian bishop, Pope Leo the Great. This prelate had contended boldly for the primacy of his native city among the sees of Christendom at the Council of Chalcedon. He now did her better service in accompanying the imperial envoys to the camp of Attila, and enforcing their persuasions by spiritual exhortations which exercised no little influence over the mind of the rude heathen. An attack upon the sacred city was represented to him as an act of fatal impiety. He was reminded that Alaric had not long survived his sacrilegious exploit. It was recorded that a vision of St. Peter and St. Paul appeared to him, threatening him with instant death. Finally, Valentinian promised him again the dowry of his sister, and under this manifold pressure he consented to desist from his enterprise, and retire once more beyond the Alps. It is probable that we are but imperfectly acquainted with the real circumstances of this

abortive expedition. The death of Attila, which promptly followed, is also shrouded in mystery. Arrived at his stockade beyond the Danube, he took one of his captives named Ildico for a consort, but on the morrow he was found extended on his bed dead and bathed in his own blood. The bride was distracted with fright or sorrow; but it seems to have been admitted that the strange event occurred from natural causes.

Rome had had a narrow escape, but her reprieve was of short duration. The wretched Valentinian, more contemptible, it is said, than even Honorius, conceived a jealousy of his only defender, Aetius, and poignarded him with his own hand. He fell himself under the blow of an assassin a few months afterwards. Such was the revenge of a senator named Maximus, whose A.D. 454. wife he had dishonoured. The emperor of the East was also dead, and no male survivor of the great Theodosius remained. Maximus required Eudoxia, the widow of Valentinian, daughter of the younger Theodosius, to accept his hand. He thought to gain her affection by confessing that it was from love of her that he had slain her husband. But she was the more incensed, and the next morning conveyed a message to Genseric, entreating him, as a loyal prince, to avenge the death of the sovereign emperor. Genseric might care but little for the claims she seemed to lay upon him, but he was greedy as ever of plunder. The empire was more than ever disorganised; the favourable moment had come. The fleets of the Vandals were in readiness, and an overwhelming force speedily entered the Tiber. The citizens were frantic with alarm, and attacked and stoned Maximus in their streets. Still the Vandals advanced. Once more Leo went forth with all the dignity of a great Christian prelate to intercede with the semi-Christian Genseric. The barbarian would not forego the anticipated plunder, but he promised that the lives of the Romans should be spared. The city was given up to pillage for fourteen days, and pillage meant blood and fire as well as booty. The Vandals heaped their vessels with ornaments of gold and silver, with the metal statues of the temples and the forum, with the precious trophies suspended in the Capitol and the temple of Peace, from which receptacle they carried away the golden candlestick and other ornaments of the ancient Temple of Jerusalem. They stripped the Capitol of one-half of its gilded tiles. The most cherished monuments of the Jewish and the Pagan religions suffered alike, but a great part of these trophies were lost in a tempest. The golden candlestick reached the African

capital, was recovered a century later and lodged in Constantinople by Justinian, and by him replaced from superstitious motives in Jerusalem. From that time its history is lost. The spoilers wafted also to Carthage a horde of 60,000 captives; among them were the empress Eudoxia, and the two daughters she had borne to Valentinian. Eudoxia was surrendered again at the request of the Eastern emperor Leo; but Genseric gave one of her children in marriage to his own son, and was proud, perhaps, thus to connect his dynasty with the imperial blood of an illustrious Roman.

The object of these latest conquerors had been simply booty, and they caused apparently little wanton havoc in the city. From Rome they descended upon Nola, Capua, and other places in the South, levying contributions as they went, and disappearing again in quest of fresh victims. Genseric abandoned Rome. He made no pretence of consolidating his conquests, or of appointing a ruler of the empire, which he still allowed to protract its nominal existence. The whole male race of Theodosius had disappeared from Roman territory. The Romans seem to have agreed to invite a distinguished noble of Gaul, named Avitus, to assume the diadem. He was a man of peace, a cultivator of arts and eloquence, a fit shadow to place upon the shadow of a throne. The army and their officers stood aloof. None among them seemed to covet the empty honour. The Senate decreed a brazen statue in the library of Trajan to the poet Sidonius Apollinaris, who declaimed before them in praise of the emperor, his father-in-law. But they appear to have been soon dissatisfied with the object of their favour, and engaged Ricimer, a Sueve, who held high rank in the army, to expel him from the city. Avitus returned quietly to his native Auvergne, his patrician palace, and his garden; but he soon fell by the hand of an assassin. The claims of the Senate to make a new appointment were either not advanced or were disregarded. The throne of the West was allowed to remain vacant for ten months, till in the spring of 457 Ricimer condescended to bestow it upon another Sueve, named Majorianus. This nominee was no man of straw. He had served under Aetius, and when accepted by the legions, he showed, perhaps to the surprise of his patron, that he was not incapable of command. He placed his various divisions under able captains; he led his troops with success himself against the Vandals, who still troubled the coast of Italy. He meditated an attack upon Genseric in his own province, and took the lead of a mingled host of Goths, Sueve, Huns, and Alans, which assembled in Gaul for that purpose. In the year 460

he crossed the Pyrenees and advanced towards Carthagera, where his fleet was ready to receive him. But Genseric was enabled to anticipate his arrival, and by the treachery of his personal enemies to surprise and destroy this armament in its harbour. Majorian was baffled and forced to retire. Ricimer had now become jealous of his authority. The Sueve effected a conspiracy against him, overpowered, and required him to relinquish the throne. Majorian died a few days afterwards, of course not without suspicion of poison. Besides his good qualities as a commander, this emperor is honourably distinguished for his zeal in legislation. He is said to have exerted himself to establish equal government among the various races in the provinces. He is noted also as a restorer of the edifices of the city, which had suffered greatly, in the decline of its wealth and population, from the dilapidation of its noblest monuments. Ricimer now placed on the throne a certain Severus, a trifling personage, who dangled the reins of government under his protection for some years. Meanwhile a party of the young men of Italy are reported to have urged a pretender named Marcellinus to call himself emperor. Indications are not wanting that this man was addicted at least to the old superstitions, and it is possible that he may have been the tool of the still lingering devotees of Paganism. Marcellinus got possession of Dalmatia, and held that province apparently undisturbed for a short period. On the death of Severus the West remained for two years without an acknowledged emperor. It was actually ruled by Ricimer, with the simpler title of patrician. Italy, for to Italy alone the empire was now confined, called at last for a titular sovereign, and Ricimer was still awed by the grandeur of the imperial style, and forbore to climb himself to the seat of the Cæsars. He now appointed a personage of distinction named Anthemius, on the recommendation, it seems, of Marcianus, at that time emperor of the East, to whose daughter he was married. Anthemius was the son of a Procopius; the two Grecian names suggest that he was a Greek by origin. A Greek writer named Damascius speaks of him as a Pagan, and imputes to him the design of restoring the ancient cult. He received the support of Marcellinus and of the innovating party, who both in the East and the West murmured, perhaps, against the ascendancy of the Christian church. It is said that he was himself a descendant of the apostate Julian. A medal has been found bearing the head of Anthemius on the one side, and the figure of Hercules on the other. Such are the slight grounds on which the accession of this emperor has been

A.D. 461.

represented as a final attempt of the Pagans. But the most that can be said for this asserted revival is that in the utter collapse of belief in the Olympian divinities there still no doubt survived a class of waverers who took refuge in philosophy from the perplexities of the creeds, and clung hopelessly to the idea that the oldest traditions were the safest. The time was approaching when many even of professed Christians would lapse into similar laxity. The pretended philosophy of the fifth and sixth century was the last point of contrast between the old religion and the new.

Anthemius sought to strengthen his position by a second marriage with the daughter of Ricimer. But this union afforded him no protection. The jealousy of the Sueve was aroused; and though the Eastern emperor still lent his aid, Anthemius was unable to make head against the new horde of barbarians which Ricimer

A.D. 472. invited to cross the Alps. In 472 the enemy appeared before the gates of Rome. The city was pressed with famine. Gilimer, a Vandal with a command in Gaul, hastened to its succour, but the invaders had already made themselves masters of the transtiberine quarter. A battle, however, ensued. Gilimer was defeated and slain. On July 11 Rome was captured for the third time. It was again given up to pillage, but there are no accounts of conflagration and destruction. Anthemius was put to death, and replaced by Olybrius, the noble to whom Genseric had given the second daughter of the empress Eudoxia. The maker of so many emperors might congratulate himself on restoring the throne he so much revered to the dynasty of Theodosius. Genseric died himself in the following month, and Olybrius followed him, both, however, by natural deaths, before the end of the year. Ricimer's soldiers, under the command of his nephew, Gundobald, now placed the diadem on the head of Glycerius. Glycerius was forced to resign in 474 in favour of Julius Nepos, a man who bore at least a genuine Roman appellation, and he was suffered to live in exile at Salona, where he became bishop, by an indulgence which was now sometimes allowed to political rivals. Nepos was constrained to abdicate in the following year, and found repose in the same quiet spot, among the gardens of Diocletian.

This last revolution was effected like those which had preceded it. Orestes, a Pannonian, but of Roman origin, had resorted with other men of distinction, amidst the troubles of the times, to the court of Attila. He had returned with wealth and reputation, and had obtained on the death of Ricimer the title of patrician, which ranked next to the imperial dignity, and was equivalent to regent

of the empire. Such was the ascendancy which in after times the Franks conferred upon the Mayor of the Palace. This chief was impatient of the sovereignty of Nepos. Orestes constrained him to descend from the throne at Ravenna; but still following the policy of Ricimer and other regents before him, he abstained from assuming the purple himself, while he went through the farce of bestowing it upon his own son, a child of six years. This child, with whom the Western empire was destined to perish, bore by some freak of fortune the name of Romulus, to which was added that of Augustus under its diminutive form Augustulus. Orestes had found it easy to seize and transfer the phantom of an empire, but he could not shake off the substantial demands of Odoacer, a barbarian of uncertain origin, the chief of a combined force from various German peoples, with which he pretended to defend the tottering throne. This man demanded his price, no less than the assignment to his myrmidons of one-third of the lands of Italy. The demand was angrily refused; but Odoacer knew his own strength, and called upon the tribes of the North to cross the Alps. Barbarians of many uncouth names, Rugians, Herulians, and Turcilingians, flocked to the standard of so liberal a leader. Orestes had sent envoys to gain the support of the Eastern emperor; he had made peace with the king of the Vandals. But he could offer no effectual resistance to the invaders. He sought refuge within the walls of Patavium; but the place was easily stormed, and he was delivered to the executioner. The reign of Augustulus was at an end in August 476, just a year after its commencement. Paulus, a brother of Orestes, was likewise put to death, but the tender years of the infant emperor were spared, and he found a last tranquil retreat in the delicious villa of Lucullus, on the coast of Surrentum.

And this was the end. Odoacer disdained to make an emperor. Yet neither did he assume the title in his own person. He was content to style himself king; but king in those days was a national, not a territorial title, and a captain of banditti could claim no nation as his subjects. The Empire of the West had ceased to be. The successors of the Cæsars who still ruled in Constantinople, and whose rule endured a thousand more years, affected to regard it as lapsed to their own crown; but they seldom attempted to secure it, and never but for a moment held it even by the skirt. Rome continued to be governed by her native bishops, or by a series of barbarian kings; and more than three centuries elapsed before her empire was nominally revived by the great German prince who reigned at Aachen.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

History of the City of Rome—1. Period of the kings and the Republic—The Palatine hill and Roma Quadrata—The Aventine and other hills—The Capitoline or Tarpeian—The Arx and the Temple of Jupiter—Etruscan structures and walls of Servius—The valleys and streets of the city—The Triumphal and Sacred Way—The Forum Romanum—The Velabrum—The dwellings of the people; their temples, theatres, and other public buildings—The aqueducts—The Capitol in the time of the Republic.

OUR review of the history of Rome commenced with a glance at the site of the city about which the affairs of a vast dominion were for many ages to revolve. Now that we have brought our narrative to a close we will revert once more to the cradle of the Roman people, and survey the growth of the city itself, which has been so often lost to our eyes while they were directed to a wider theatre, and to affairs of more engrossing interest. Some occasional repetition will perhaps be pardoned in an attempt to bring under one view many particulars which have already come under notice each in its proper place. The Palatine hill, the original abode of the Romans, lay, indeed, imbedded in the slopes around it, like a child in its cradle. The seven hills over which the growing city soon spread were also secure in the strength of their position. Very remarkable it is that, constantly at war, and exposed to the attacks of states and confederations often much more powerful than their own, the Romans were only twice compelled to open their gates to a foreign assailant till the last hour of their decrepitude had struck. It was, further, the observation of Cicero that Rome was admirably adapted for habitation, from the healthiness of its actual situation, though in the midst of an unhealthy tract of country. Possibly this also had an effect upon the history of the people. The malaria of the Campagna around, though less deadly in early than in later times, induced the citizens of the infant commonwealth to reside permanently within their walls, while it cast a belt of land around them upon which the stranger was little tempted to establish himself. Rome was cradled in the plain of Latium.

We begin our account of the city with its earliest traditions: the Capitoline and the Janiculan are represented as the first of the summits to be occupied, the one by Saturn, the other by Janus, and to have received their names from these divinities. The appellation of Janiculum survives to the present day. That of Saturnia was early



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lost in the name *Tarpeia*, supposed to be an Etruscan word for 'rock,' and this again has yielded to the more common designation of *Capitoline*, now transformed into *Campidoglio*. The original settlement of the Palatine was ascribed to *Evander*, a fugitive from *Arcadia*, and the name of the hill itself, which has remained unchanged through all the revolutions which have swept over it, was derived, according to the most ancient traditions, from the founder's son, *Pallas*. Upon this eminence *Romulus* was supposed to have erected his stronghold, but whether his '*Roma quadrata*' occupied the whole of the four-sided plateau on its summit, or was confined to the western portion only, is still a matter of debate. Some modern antiquarians represent the hill as divided into a western and an eastern eminence, to which they give the names of *Germalus* and *Velia* by a depression in the centre, but the existence of such a depression is questioned by others. The ancient and the modern levels here, as elsewhere, differ by many feet, and it would be rash to draw an important inference from any slight indications of this nature. It may be said, however, that the historical notices of the Rome of *Romulus* belong generally to the western portion of the hill. Wherever it was that the first founder drew the furrow which traced the line for his walls, he left a narrow strip of land both within and without it, which was called the *pomœrium*, and was designed to be kept free from buildings. This was the limit within which only the auspices could be taken, and the most important religious rites be performed. The religion of Rome was eminently local, and this it was that made the city so long the real social centre of the empire.

The Palatine and Aventine are separated by a hollow called the *Vallis Murcia*, through which flows a rivulet named by the ancients *Aqua Crabra*, now *Marrana*. Here, without the original walls, *Romulus* is said to have placed his circus, called afterwards *Maximus*. He did not invite his Sabine neighbours within his enclosed fortress. The circus was an oblong space, encompassed with seats cut in the turf, rounded only at one end. It was 600 yards in length. At later periods it was fitted with wooden and stone galleries, and magnificently decorated. The stream which now creeps through this area must either have been arched over, or carried by an artificial channel on one side of it.

While the Palatine was thus occupied by the Latin, Etruscan, or mixed people to whom our legends give the name of Romans, the *Quirinal*, and possibly the *Viminal* and *Esquiline* also, were held by

Sabines. The Capitoline or Tarpeian, the old Etruscan word for a rock, seems to have been contested by them, the Romans, according to the common accounts, being the first in possession of it. The two hostile tribes eventually divided the disputed site between them, and the level space between all these hills became the common place of meeting of the united nation, the famous Forum Romanum.

Of the foundation of cities on the Cælian and the Aventine different accounts are given. The Aventine at least seems to have been assigned to an outlying tribe politically dependent upon the Romans, but not admitted to full citizenship with them. On this hill was the meeting of the great Latin confederacy under the patronage of the goddess Diana, whose temple stood throughout the period of our history on its summit. The temple of Romulus, under the Sabine name of Quirinus, was said to have been erected by Numa upon the Quirinal, which had been before called Agonus. The fortification of the Janiculum is ascribed to Ancus, who is also supposed to have constructed the Mamertine prison, on the north-east face of the Capitoline.

The strongholds on these various summits, including the smaller eminences of Cispius and Oppius, were first united by a common wall by Servius Tullius. Such was the original city of the seven hills. Traces of this surrounding rampart, very ancient and, no doubt, original, have been presented in some places to recent explorers. The rear of the Esquiline was defended by an earthen mound, known as the Agger Servii, of which some vestiges are still apparent. The heights of the Tarpeian hill, a precipitous projection from the Quirinal, with which it was originally connected by a depressed ridge, not levelled till the time of Trajan, were left, perhaps, to the strength of their natural defences. The stream of the Tiber protected the city on the west. The Janiculum was at first an unconnected outpost, but the rivers might be crossed by a wooden bridge, the Sublician, placed under the care of certain priests, who thence derived, according to a specious etymology, the name of Pontifices, or bridge-makers. But the real word is more probably 'Pompifices.' This was the bridge cut down behind the valiant Cocles. It stood probably just beneath the Aventine.

These combined villages required a common citadel. The Capitoline or Tarpeian occupied the most prominent position among the seven hills. It rises in two summits, of which the northern, or, more exactly, the north-eastern, is about thirty feet higher than the other. We may naturally suppose that this would be the site selected for

the *Arx*, or citadel of Rome; but it may be alleged, on the other hand, that the southern height more immediately commands the Tiber, and fronts the Etruscan border. The question is still open to argument or conjecture, and the various texts which bear upon it have been diversely interpreted by divers modern critics. Not only so, but the point has become a matter of dispute between rival schools of antiquarians, and the judgment they have pronounced has fluctuated from one age to another. On many accounts the question still in agitation is among the most curious problems of its kind. It will probably find its solution at no distant date, and no prudent antiquarian will venture at this moment to speak positively upon it; but the foregoing history has been written on the presumption, to which the latest inquirers generally lean, that the foundations of the *Arx* will one day be discovered on the northern summit. Whichever was the site of the *Arx*, the opposite height of the same hill bore the august edifice of the Capitol, or the Capitoline temple. The great national divinities, Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, were here worshipped in three distinct cells, but all under one roof. It may be supposed that the rectangular area of the temple, described to have measured about 200 feet each way, applies not to these three cells alone, but to the precinct, inclosed by rows of columns, within which they stood. Upon this national temple the Romans lavished the most brilliant ornaments, but its proportions were by no means lofty; and when it was burnt down, which happened to it more than once in the course of its history, superstition forbade them, though at the height of their pride and opulence, to increase the elevation. The depression between the two summits, which is known as the *Intermontium*, was occupied by many objects of historical interest; among others, by the venerable Asylum or sanctuary of Romulus. The area is now dignified by the equestrian statue of the most virtuous of the Romans, the emperor Marcus Aurelius.

At a period of very great antiquity, popularly assigned to the reign of Tarquinius Priscus, a great effort was made to drain off the waters of the interior of the city, and convey them beneath the soil to their natural outfall in the Tiber. A stream still trickles from the Cælian hill down the *Vallis Murcia*, the hollow between the Palatine and the Aventine, and finds its way into the river through the *Forum Boarium*. This stream was confined in a covered channel of masonry, and was conducted into another channel, which conveyed the waters which lay in various pools and marshes on the other side of the Palatine. This was the larger channel of the two, and

served for the drainage of the greater part of the city. It received the name of *Cloaca Maxima*, and was built in a style so massive that it has lasted down to the present day. The arch through which the accumulated waters are discharged is still a conspicuous object on the river-bank, and may serve to prove that the level of the Tiber has perhaps risen a little, but not above two or three feet at most, since the date of its original construction. The ancient writers asserted that the vault of the *Cloaca* was high and wide enough to admit a cart loaded with hay, and *Agrippa*, who caused it to be cleansed in the time of *Augustus*, is said to have traversed it in a boat. Another remnant of the so-called kingly period still existing is the *Mamertine* prison, under the *Capitoline*. This structure is composed of immense blocks of the stone called *peperino*, and was at first supposed to have comprised only two chambers, one above the other; but in recent times more extensive buildings have been discovered, which may have been added at various periods. There can be no doubt that this was the actual place of confinement of *Jugurtha*, *Vercingetorix*, and the *Catilinarian* conspirators. An ancient ecclesiastical tradition pretends that *St. Peter* was also imprisoned in it. The upper chamber has accordingly been fitted up as a Christian oratory, and a church has been erected above it.

Among other incidents that point to a temporary decline of Rome in vigour and resources we may remark that after the period of the *Etruscan* kings, or whoever were the builders of the *Servian* walls, the substructions of the hills, the *Cloaca* and the *Mamertine*, we meet with no more buildings of similar proportions, or in a similar style. The city of the *Tarquins* seems next to be occupied by a degenerate race, who erected their houses, and even their temples, chiefly of wood or inferior brick, and thatched them with straw or shingles. The *Forum* was still at times a swamp, the cliffs of the hills were still generally for the most part fringed with briars and brushwood, when the *Gauls* swept away the ancient city in one general conflagration. The *Roman* antiquarians might pretend, indeed, at a much later period to point out the *Ruminal* fig-tree, the hut of *Romulus*, the temple of *Vesta*, and other relics of a primitive age, but the genuineness of these objects was belied by the most authentic history. After the great fire of the *Gauls* the city, we are told, was rebuilt in a hasty and irregular manner, without regard even to the old lines of the streets, or of the sewers beneath them. The lanes which choked the level spaces and hollows were tortuous and narrow, with lofty houses obstructing

the light and air; while the hills were for the most part occupied by the temples and public buildings, or by the mansions and gardens of the nobles. The great men of the city coveted the loftiest and most airy situations, from which they could look down upon the plebeian multitudes below, and from which they descended daily to the affairs of the Campus or the Forum, attended by their numerous escort of slaves and clients. But on the lower levels the people regained their ascendancy, and required gross flatteries, with largesses and other vulgar compliances, to engage their votes in the comitia. The names of several streets and alleys in the lower city are recorded, but hardly one is known to have led over the summit of any of the hills, which were generally scaled by stairs and accessible to foot-passengers only. This is a significant indication that the mass of the population was now confined—and, indeed, continued always to be mostly confined—to the valleys. But, indeed, in all Rome there was at this time only one street that deserves the name of an avenue, and which offered a common thoroughfare for men, horses, and vehicles. This was the line along which the procession of the triumphs passed; and it was for this and other sacred ceremonies that its width and straight direction were maintained. The august procession was formed in the Campus Martius, without the walls. Entering the city at the Porta Triumphalis, between the Capitoline and the Tiber (such being, perhaps, the name specially given on these occasions to the gate called otherwise Flumentana), the victorious general was conducted, at the head of his troops, his trophies, and his captives, across the Velabrum into the Circus Maximus, and so, following, it is supposed, the exact line of the ancient pomerium, along the valley which separates the Palatine from the Cælian. The arch of Constantine stands at the spot where his route turned again sharply to the left, and climbed the gentle slope of the Velia, and here it was again spanned in imperial times by the arch of Titus. From this elevation he came in sight of the Arx and temple of Jupiter. Thence he descended, keeping to the right side of the Forum, to the foot of the Capitoline, and again the arch of Severus spanned his road at the point where he turned once more to ascend the face of the hill. The Clivus Capitolinus was bordered by various temples, and led through the Porta Pandana into the sacred inclosure. This road was dignified with the name of the Via Sacra. The Appian Way, which branched off from it, and issued from the city at the Porta Capena, was first paved in 312 B.C., and the Flaminian, which led in the opposite

direction north, in 220. It was not till 174 that the pavement was extended into the heart of the city to the Golden Milestone, the point at the foot of the Capitoline, from which Augustus intended, it is said, to measure the roads of the empire. It seems, however, that the measurement continued still to be taken, as of old, from the gates of the Servian wall. The pavement of the Sacred Way, consisting of large angular blocks of basaltic lava, may still be seen at various spots along its course; and the lines of several streets in other parts of the city are detected at this day by the similar work upon which the labourers strike from time to time in their excavations.

Of all the localities of Rome during the early republic the Forum Romanum alone admits of any specific topographical account. This open space, appropriated to the civic business of the Roman people, lay at the foot of the Capitoline, and reached to the slope of the Velia, embracing the area of the modern Campo Vaccino. The Italian antiquaries were inclined till recently to give it a lateral extension, between the Capitoline and the Palatine, in the direction of the Velabrum; but the discovery of the Basilica Julia, which must have confined it on this side, at least at a later period, induces them now to modify this hypothesis. The oblong space above indicated, narrowing as it approached the Velia, was inclosed north and south by the lines of the Sacred Way and the New Way. Along these lines stood rows of open booths or shops, fronted by stone pillars; the southern row was interrupted by the house of Numa, the temple of Vesta, and possibly that of Castor and Pollux. An altar near the centre of this area marked the site of the Curtian Pool, which in early times had been a mere swamp; and three sacred trees, a wild vine, a fig, and an olive, were carefully preserved or renewed hard by, still showing that the spot had been formerly a jungle. The Forum was early decorated with some statues of illustrious citizens, of wood, perhaps, rather than of stone. The Comitium, an open platform raised a few steps above the Forum, was the meeting-place of the patricians, and was furnished with a hall or curia; opposite to which, but erected upon the platform, stood the rostrum, or pulpit, from which the orators addressed them. The Comitium may best be placed at the northern angle of the Forum, beneath the slope of the Capitoline. C. Gracchus was the first to turn in his public harangues from the patricians in the Comitium to the commons on the lower level of the Forum, and the direction of this pulpit was changed accordingly. The name of rostrum was

given to it in the sixth century of the city, when it was adorned by Duilius with the brazen beaks, or rostra, of the Carthaginian vessels.

While the houses of the nobles were generally placed on the Palatine or the Cælian, or in the Carinæ, on the slope of the Esquiline, the dwellings of the poor plebeians thronged the principal seats of traffic, the level of the Velabrum on the one, and of the Suburra on the other side of the Forum. The mansions, however, of the nobles were frequently surrounded by the cabins of their dependents resting against their walls, and forming one block of buildings with them. A single house, standing by itself, was styled a *domus*; a cluster of dwellings, such as has been just described, an *insula*, or island; but the little cabins which went to make up the aggregate insula were often loosely denominated *insulæ* themselves. The architecture of these buildings was rude and massive; the houses of the great were castles rather than villas. It was not till the introduction of the Greek taste that they received at the hands of Greek artists the decorations for which they might be afterwards famous. But generally the Romans reserved the columns and friezes of Hellenic art for the exterior of their temples and the interior adornment of their choicest dwellings. The temple with its Ionic or Corinthian portico was generally plain and dark within; the house, florid with mouldings and encrusted with marbles inside, might present only bare, unsightly walls to the spectator from without.

The public amusements of the Romans were consecrated to religion; and next to the temples we may refer to the theatres of the city. The first scenic representations at Rome were derived, not from the Greeks, but from the Etruscans, and the first theatres were constructed before the introduction of Grecian models. The Romans, indeed, had little opportunity for excavating the theatres or the circus out of the solid rock. It was not till they had arrived at a high pitch of luxury and extravagance that they undertook to erect edifices of stone capacious enough to accommodate large portions of the population. The first permanent theatre of stone was that of the great Pompeius, which was placed in the Campus Martius, as the common resort for popular amusement. It was surrounded with groves and porticos, and was combined with a temple, to which the seats of the theatre formed a magnificent ascent. The consul Flaminius built a second circus, also in the Campus, below the Capitoline. In this quarter stood also the *Septa*,

or polling-booths of the Roman people, when they met in their military organization by classes to elect their magistrates; and here also, in the temple of Bellona, the emperor met the Senate on his return from service abroad before he was admitted into the city. The meetings of the Senate were sometimes held in the temple of Concord, beneath the Capitoline; sometimes in the Curia Hostilia, which also skirted the Forum; sometimes in halls or temples outside the walls. During the last century of the Free State the erection of basilicas, or halls for public business, and of private palaces, as well as of temples, went on with increasing magnificence, and was generally the work of private munificence. The greatest nobles lavished their enormous fortunes in such constructions, by which they gained the favour and suffrages of the multitude. The mansions of C. Octavius, of Æmilius Scaurus, of Crassus the orator, and of Catulus the prince of the Senate, are specified as among the finest of their day; but these were speedily eclipsed by those of Crassus the rich, of Lepidus, consul in B.C. 78, and others. The house of Lepidus was adorned with a profusion of Numidian marbles, and was esteemed the most splendid of that time in Rome; but the discovery of the magnificence of the Ptolemies and other Eastern potentates gave a fresh impulse to the taste for palatial decoration, and within thirty-five years, according to Pliny, the house of Lepidus was outshone by a hundred rivals. The gardens of Lucullus and Sallust may be mentioned among the chief monuments of this advancing luxury. The latter stood on the Pincian hill, near the Porta Salara, and continued to hold a high place among the ornaments of the city throughout the period of the emperors.

Among the most remarkable features of Roman architecture were the aqueducts, which furnished the city with water from distant sources, for the abundant but turbid supply of the Tiber itself was early rejected. Two of these watercourses were constructed under the republic, the Aqua Appia, by Appius Cæcus, in 312 B.C., and the Anio Vetus, as it was called (275), by Curius Dentatus. The first of these was led from a spring on the road to Præneste, seven or eight miles from the city, to the Salinæ outside the Porta Trigemina, beneath the Aventine; but the stream had been conveyed in leaden pipes underground as far as the Porta Capena, from whence it required only twelve arches to carry it within the city. The second was brought from beyond Tibur, on the river Anio, and was also led underground, with many windings,

a distance of forty-three miles. This, too, entered the city at the Esquiline on a row of arches for above 200 paces. These two canals sufficed to supply the wants of the Roman people throughout the period of the free-state. Augustus executed several other works of the same kind, for which the increasing number of baths as well as the still increasing population created further demands. The list eventually extended to fourteen, and their destruction one by one under the ravages of the barbarians marks significantly the decline of the city both in luxury and numbers. Some remains of these great structures, which reached in more than one direction for several miles across the Campagna, are still among the most striking ruins of the ancient world.

The tribune Saturninus was blockaded in the Capitoline in the year B.C. 100. He was reduced to surrender by cutting the pipes which supplied the fortress, and no injury was done to the buildings. The great temple of Jupiter was less fortunate when, during the wars of Marius and Sulla, it fell a prey to the flames with other adjacent edifices. Sulla undertook the auspicious task of restoring it. He robbed the Olympieum at Athens of several columns which had been prepared for it; but he had not the good fortune to complete the work. Q. Lutatius Catulus, prince of the Senate, and the most venerated of his countrymen at that epoch, was chosen for the honour of finishing the design. He was allowed to engrave his own name upon the entablature of the temple. Catulus added to the splendour both of the materials and of the architectural decorations; but he was forbidden by the pontiffs to make any change either in its ground-plan or its ancient proportions. Hence, though conspicuous from its high and isolated position, and ever the centre of religious interest to the whole Roman people, the Capitol was neither lofty itself nor spacious, nor do we ever find it extolled for the grandeur of its dimensions. Catulus rebuilt also the Tabularium, or record-office, in front of the Intermonium, between the Arx and the temple, and his name—which, as usual with the Roman builders, he inscribed upon it—has actually been discovered among its ruins in modern times. With the constructions of Julius Cæsar at the closing period of the republic commences a new era in the history of the city. A conscious and deliberate design becomes apparent for the embellishment, the reconstruction, the transformation of Rome from the stronghold of an Italian tribe into the imperial residence of the greatest of autocrats. Another chapter shall be reserved to describe the capital of the Cæsars.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

History of the City of Rome—2. Period of the empire—Extension of the Roman forum by Julius Cæsar—His further architectural plans not executed—Augustus continues the restoration and embellishment of the city—Materials of which the buildings of Rome were made—The house of Augustus on the Palatine—Subsequent enlargement of the palace by Tiberius and Caligula—Caligula's bridge across the Velabrum—The 'Golden house' of Nero—Burning and rebuilding of the city in the Greek style—Vespasian restores the Capitol and erects the Colosseum—Baths and Arch of Titus—Equestrian statue of Domitian—Buildings of Trajan and Hadrian—Columns of Trajan and the Antonines—Septizonium of Severus—Baths of Caracalla—Walls of Aurelian—Temple of the Sun—Constructions of Maxentius and Constantine—Repair of the walls by Honorius—Extent and estimated population of the city—Decline of Rome after the building of Constantinople—Rome pillaged by Alaric, captured by Genserich and by Ricimer—Temples converted into Christian churches—Rome eventually ruined by the loss of its population.

THE career of the great Julius marks an era in the history of the city as well as in the political institutions of Rome. Cæsar was the first of the Romans who conceived the idea of enlarging the interior accommodation of the forum and the public buildings by which it was surrounded. It was in just accordance with the spirit which he brought to the extension of the suffrage and the incorporation of the provinces, that he added a new forum, which he called the Julian, to the Roman, thus almost doubling the area in which the people might meet for the transaction of civil affairs. This addition was made on the north-eastern side, and it swept away a mass of wretched buildings that crowded the gorge of the Suburra at the foot of the three Sabine hills. It was not possible, indeed, to combine the two open spaces in one, for the basilica of Æmilius stood between them; but the access from the one to the other was made sufficiently practicable, and from that time forth succeeding emperors, acting on the same grand design, added forum to forum in the same direction, till from the Velia to the Campus Martius the citizen might march upon continuous pavements of cut stone, intersected by innumerable arcades and decorated with a variety of halls and temples.

The forum of Julius was graced with his temple to Venus 'the Ancestress,' before which stood a curious equestrian statue of himself. The horse on which his figure was placed had a monstrous fore-hoof, similar, it was said, to a human foot, and the popular story

intimated that it was modelled from the animal which the dictator had actually been wont to ride. But in fact both horse and rider had been cast in bronze by Lysippus for the Grecian Alexander, and had been appropriated, with the substitution of a new head only, to the Roman conqueror. Such representations of horses and bulls are, in fact, no other than the Persian emblems of strength and royal authority. The basilica of Julius, standing between the Forum and the Velabrum, replaced probably some earlier structure at the same spot. It continued to be as useful as well as a handsome ornament of the city down to late ages. Its basement has been discovered within the last few years. The bold design which the same great improver contemplated of turning the course of the Tiber nearer to the foot of the Vatican hill, and so enlarging the area of the Campus, needs only be mentioned, as further evidence of the necessity he felt for giving more freedom of movement to the pent-up population of the still increasing city. His premature death frustrated its execution, nor was it again taken up at any later period. On the spot where the dictator's body was consumed, in front of the temple of Vesta and the Regia of the chief pontiff, in which he resided, an heroon or small chapel was promptly erected to his divinity. This was afterwards enlarged, and became a temple, conspicuous from its position if not from its magnificence. The spot must have been a hundred yards in advance of the modern church of S. Francesca Romana, where it faced the Capitol and the great national temple of Jupiter.

The architectural plans of Julius Cæsar gave a strong impulse as well as a special direction to the policy of his successors. The idea of enlarging and embellishing the city, of restoring old buildings and erecting new, became fixed in the minds, not perhaps of the emperors only, but of the civic authorities who worked under them and for them. The taste for building was national, and was now to be gratified without stint. Augustus undertook, in the first place, a complete restoration of the sacred edifices, large and small, which had fallen into general decay during the troubles of the civil wars, and in the common decline of religious sentiment. To these he added many temples of his own, of which the most important were that to Mars Ultor, in the centre of the new forum which he added to the Julian, and of Apollo on the Palatine. The portico of Octavia, the theatre of Marcellus, the mausoleum assigned to the Julian family in the Campus Martius, were others of his special works. The population which had been dispossessed of its dwellings to make

room for the new forum seems to have migrated westward, and spread over the rear of the Esquiline and the Cælian. The Campus, which is the most crowded portion of modern Rome, was kept for the most part free from such encroachments; but the exercises of the citizens became gradually more and more confined; after the time of Augustus they probably ceased altogether, and the broad space between the Capitol and the Flaminian gate, the Pincian hill and the Tiber, was invaded by numerous public constructions of the largest proportions and the greatest splendour. Eminent among these the theatre of Statilius Taurus, and the Pantheon of Agrippa, with its baths, halls, and porticos stretching in various directions. The long pomp of the triumph, threading the straight road from the Flaminian gate to the Capitoline, between the rows of sumptuous edifices, resplendent with marble, brass, and gold, has been more than once represented to us as one of the grandest spectacles of the Roman world.

Augustus continued building and rebuilding for a space of nearly fifty years. He could say, at the close of his career that he 'found the city of brick and left it of marble.' Apart from all rhetorical ornament, let us consider what this may mean. The earliest structures in Rome had been confined, besides private dwellings of straw and wood, to walls of large squared blocks of the sandstone named tufa, quarried in the hills of Rome itself. The fragments of wall, ascribed by the most sanguine antiquarians to the commencement of the regal period, are of this domestic material. The Roman masons next extended their operations to some of the neighbouring cliffs, from which they extracted the stone called peperino, a sandstone also, but differing in some respects from tufa. This material was employed also upon the walls of the Etruscan dynasty, and the substructions of the Capitoline and other hills of the city. It was applied, no doubt, to the temples of that period also, but of these no remains can now be discovered. With the republic, it is said, came in the age of brick, which continued for centuries to supply the principal material for buildings, both public and domestic. The invention of the arch mainly depended for its success upon the use of brick, and the convenience and readiness with which the brick arch could be multiplied from space to space carried everything before it. Temples and palaces as well as solid walls were suspended upon arches; streams of water were conveyed on arches; long lines of arcades were extended from street to street and from hill to hill. Private dwellings were reared with many storeys, and where they

could abut against the cliff behind they rose perhaps to considerable elevations, like some ancient houses in our mediæval cities. Augustus decreed that no such house should exceed seventy feet in height. This, however, was but a small step in the transformation which was now commencing in the construction of the city and its dwellings. While the older edifices still presented their lofty gables in brick, or more commonly in wood, projecting over the narrow streets, the newer quarters were laid out in broader ways, with lower houses in the Grecian fashion, faced at least with stone. The travertine, or limestone of Albano, a kind of marble, was used to a great extent to cover the plain brickwork of the frugal citizen-builders. The new forums of the imperial period presented all the features of the august capitals of Egypt and Syria, with their long columnar frontages, and marked horizontal lines of architecture. The new temples which graced the summits of all the hills, and skirted their ridges, imparted to the whole city an air of luxurious decoration, while the ancient walls of Servius and the kings before him were swept away or hidden out of sight by a generation which had ceased to contemplate an hostile attack as possible. The primitive city within the Servian fortifications had been divided into four quarters. These Augustus distributed again into six, and to these six he added eight more, which extended in all directions beyond them. It seems probable that these fourteen quarters occupied pretty exactly the space which was afterwards inclosed in strong fortifications by Aurelian, and these again are nearly co-limaneous with the walls now existing. But how this area was defined by Augustus is not ascertained; whether it was encircled in his time by the pomerium, or sacred limit, marked out by bound-stones or cippi, or by an agger or other slight defensive work. Whatever was the line of demarcation, it comprehended, no doubt, all the continuous buildings which had grown up at this period around the earlier city, together with considerable spaces reserved for public and private gardens.

The house which Augustus himself first occupied on the Palatine was the modest mansion of a noble but not illustrious family. It had belonged to the orator Hortensius, and was purchased by the emperor, after he had risen to greatness, as a suitable residence for a citizen who affected moderation in everything. The citizens, however, were not content. The Senate added to it some larger chambers, no doubt for their prince's use on public occasions. Both the original dwelling and these additions to it may be traced at the

present day. They occupy the ridge of the hill which faces the Capitoline, towards the northern corner, which was supposed to be the site of the primitive residence of Romulus. The Romans were careful also to mark the place where their favourite emperor was born, in a lane called the *Capita Bubula*, close to the modern church of St. Teodoro. From the time of Augustus the Palatium, or imperial residence, continued to encroach upon the summit of the hill. Tiberius extended it along the western side, Caligula carried his additions still further, and advanced it towards the Forum. At the northern angle he connected it with the temple of Castor and Pollux, which he contrived to use as a vestibule to it, and from the same spot he threw his famous bridge across the Velabrum, to give access from his residence to the temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline. This seems to have been a structure of gigantic proportions. He may have been urged to it by the accounts he had received from his associate, king Agrippa, of the bridge by which the palace of Herod was connected with the Temple at Jerusalem. The bridge seems to have been constructed of brick, faced, no doubt, with travertine, and to have been of great height, carried as it was over the top of the original dwelling of Augustus. It is supposed that a similar arcade had already been thrown over the valley between the Palatine and the Cælian, and that both were made serviceable in conveying water from the fountains to the interior hills of the city. But if this be so, it is certain that both these aqueducts were destroyed at a very early period. The bridge of Caligula, which was, perhaps, after all, a series of arches connecting the halls and temples between the palace and the Capitol, was swept away without compunction on the fall of its designer. There remain on the face of the Palatine some indications of what may have been the spring of its first arch, but all further trace of it has utterly disappeared.

The conceptions of Nero were still grander and more extravagant. After commencing a temple to Claudius on the Cælian he suspended or pulled down his work, in order to erect on the spot a new wing to the imperial residence. No doubt he connected the two with an arcade; possibly he adapted that which has just been mentioned to the purpose he had in view. He went on to connect the Palatine in a similar way with the Esquiline, and commenced some magnificent constructions on the site of the villa of Mæcenæ. Thus the spot on which the Colosseum stands became the centre of the three great members of the imperial residence, and here he erected a vestibule or grand entrance, and placed a colossal statue of

himself in front of it. Within the vast space thus enclosed he laid out gardens and parks, with their appropriate lakes or fish-ponds. It may be presumed, however, that various thoroughfares were left for the use of the citizens in a range of buildings which, as the Romans, with pardonable exaggeration, complained, 'embraced the whole city.' These works, however, were yet unfinished when they were interrupted by the great fire, the most important era in the history of the city. The conflagration commenced near the Porta Capena, and was carried by the wind along the course of the two valleys which divide the Palatine from the Cælian and the Aventine. It was not arrested till the two streams of fire met again in the Forum or the Velabrum. Thus they completely encircled the central hill, and swept at the same time the bases of the slopes that surrounded it. A second conflagration, a few days later, rushed with a change of wind in an opposite direction from the foot of the Pincian towards the Capitoline. Of the fourteen regions four, it is said, were wholly consumed, and seven others more or less injured; three only escaped without damage. Generally the lower parts of the city, the old plebeian quarters, suffered more than the elevations. The buildings on the Capitoline were untouched; those on the Palatine only partially damaged; but the ancient monuments of the republic in the Suburra, the Forum, and the Velabrum were swept entirely away. Space and opportunity were now presented for the reconstruction of Rome in the fashionable style of Greece and Asia, and the eagerness with which Nero improved the occasion in the taste of the day lent a colour to the current imputations against him, of having himself kindled the flames, or at least forbidden their extinction.

With the aid of his accomplished architects, Severus and Celer, Nero undertook to rebuild his capital after the manner of an Eastern autocrat. The varied levels of the site of Rome, although by this time much less marked than they had originally been, still forbade the extension of the new streets in the rectangular style of the chief Oriental cities, which had risen at the command of the sovereign and by a single architectural effort. Modern cities may be planned, but ancient cities have always grown and developed. The avenues of restored Rome were now widened and straightened as far as was practicable: the great blocks of houses were generally encompassed by colonnades; the height of private dwellings diminished. Brick was still in constant use, and the brickwork of the age of Nero is accounted the most workmanlike of any; nevertheless, it was most

commonly coated with stone, and the basements at least even of plebeian cabins were constructed, as a rule, of the costlier material. The old inhabitants complained of the loss of their lofty houses and narrow alleys, which afforded shade from the sun and shelter from the winds. They were right, perhaps, in alleging that the architecture of Egypt and Syria was ill-suited to the variable climate of Rome. But the imperial caprice, which coincided, no doubt, with the general taste of the day, seems to have been carried out effectually, and the city of the Cæsars assumed under his auspices a new and even a foreign aspect.

At the same time the emperor carried on the completion of his Golden House, as he styled the enormous and highly-embellished residence he had heaped together, and in which he said that he was at last 'lodged as a man should be.' He constructed also a circus on the Vatican slope for the amusement of the people as well as his own private entertainment, and we now enter upon the period when the greatest architectural additions to the city began to be planned for the use of the sovereign people itself. The earlier emperors had erected their halls and temples to magnify the state, their palaces to magnify themselves and their own office; but the Flavian dynasty felt the necessity of conciliating its subjects in the city, and proceeded to consult their pride and pleasure by the construction of places of amusement and relaxation. Vespasian pulled down the greater part of the Golden House, and replaced it with magnificent buildings for general use. The Flavian amphitheatre or Colosseum occupied, as we have seen, its central space; the baths of Titus covered the brow of the Esquiline; the portion of the palace which occupied the Cælian and stood on the site of the Claudian temple was appropriated to other buildings, connected with the shows of the amphitheatre. Vespasian and Titus were content to shrink themselves within moderate dimensions, while they left the people, by whose goodwill they reigned, in ostensible possession of the most gorgeous structures of their common city.

The civil wars which ensued upon the death of Nero are memorable in the history of the city from the burning of the Capitol, the narrative of which shows that the Arx had become wholly untenable, and was held of no account in the defence of the position. Vespasian undertook as a public duty the restoration of the national temple, and was now allowed to raise its elevation but not to enlarge its foundations. The restoration was hardly completed when the edifice was again damaged by an accidental fire, and the repairs of

Domitian seem to have been still more splendid. The gilding of the roof alone cost a sum which may well have been enormous; but the positive statement that it amounted to 12,000 talents, or nearly three millions sterling, must be rejected as simply incredible. The equestrian statue which this emperor erected in his own honour in the centre of the Roman forum possesses special interest from the description of the poet Statius, which assists us in determining some important sites around it. These verses have been often appealed to for the evidence they apparently give of the position of the temple of Vespasian beneath the Capitol; but this is one of the points of Roman topography which seems destined to be settled and again unsettled with each succeeding generation of antiquarians.

But though Domitian was not backward in magnifying his father, his brother, and himself, he too studied to ingratiate himself with the citizens, and instituted many shows, games, and prizes for their entertainment. To satisfy the lower tastes of the people was recognised by succeeding emperors as an effectual means of government. Nerva and Trajan made new additions to the forums; the area which was inclosed by the colonnades of Trajan, adorned with his temple, his arch, and the graceful pillar surmounted by his statue, was thenceforth regarded as the noblest monument of the city. This forum connected the interior of the city with the Campus Martius beyond the walls, for which purpose its designer levelled the ridge, which down to that late period had still united the Quirinal with the Capitol. The principal works of Hadrian, after the completion of the forum of Trajan, were the temple of Venus and Rome, with two cells placed back to back, the largest of all the sacred edifices of the city, and the colossal mausoleum which he erected for his own sepulchre, that of Augustus being already full, beyond the Tiber. The Mole of Hadrian, as this building was popularly designated, was connected with the Campus by the Pons Ælius, now the bridge of S. Angelo.

The fashion of erecting commemorative columns, begun by Trajan, was followed by both the Antonines. That of Pius was, indeed, of much smaller proportions. Its fragments have been discovered in modern times, and the base alone has been placed in the gardens of the Vatican. The column of Aurelius still stands, and forms one of the most conspicuous objects of modern Rome. Under Commodus the city suffered again from fire. Severus erected the Septizonium, a large edifice, raised on seven ranges of columns, the object and further character of which are unknown to us. The tri-

umphal arch of this imperator, at the foot of the Capitol, faces that of Titus on the Velia; both of them impressive monuments of the military greatness of the empire, for Severus was the conqueror of Britain, and Titus the conqueror of Palestine. The Antonine Baths, which exceeded in extent even those of Titus, occupied a large area beyond the Porta Capena, and we may infer, perhaps, that the population was not then densely located in that southern quarter. The work is commonly ascribed to Antoninus Caracalla; possibly it was finished by Alexander Severus. The series of aqueducts introduced into the city, already eight in number, was completed by the Aqua Alexandrina of this latter emperor, by which these baths are supposed to have been supplied. Alexander constructed also a new circus in the Campus Martius, the limits of which are still defined by the inclosure of the Piazza Navona. The city had arrived at the height of its external splendour, and also of its population, though its actual wealth and resources had begun already to decline, when a sudden alarm from the incursion of the barbarians into Italy induced Aurelian in the third century to secure it by a line of regular fortifications. The walls, which still exist, reveal the date of their original construction to experienced eyes by their materials and masonry. They have suffered repeated injuries, and have been levelled at various points; but, restored and repaired in successive ages, they still seem to mark not only the line occupied by Aurelian, but that which had been already suggested to him by earthworks of a much earlier date. The walls of Aurelian, according to our latest authorities, must not be regarded as a new circumvallation. They comprehend, indeed, pretty exactly the whole of the fourteen regions of Augustus, the space which almost three centuries earlier was considered to belong to the city of Rome. The extent of these walls measures about $12\frac{1}{4}$ of our English miles, and this closely corresponds with the statement of Pliny, that the *mænia* of the city embraced a circuit of 13 m. p. These *mænia* cannot apply to the *muris* of Servius, which measured eight miles only, and must plainly be referred to the outer lines, less defined and regular, as they existed under the early emperors. The same word is used in a more general sense for the buildings of a city, especially such as are continuous, and in either sense it may adequately represent the extent of the city, whether under Augustus or Aurelian.

It is important to observe that the buildings of Rome in the third century did not materially exceed those which already existed in the first. The city was in some parts more densely built, and

doubtless still more densely populated at the later period than at the earlier. The green meadows of the Campus had nearly disappeared, but the buildings in that quarter were still almost wholly of a public character. The extrusion of the people from the interior of the city had diffused them over the exterior hills; nevertheless, even here vast spaces were still occupied by the gardens of the great nobility, and every generation had witnessed fresh additions to the temples, halls, baths, and other public edifices, which covered apparently a larger proportion of the whole area at Rome than in any other city with which we can compare it. The density of private dwellings in any of our mediæval cities, or even in London or Paris at the present day, is certainly beyond comparison greater than it ever was at Rome. The emperors seem to have experienced no difficulty in clearing ground for their enormous constructions. But, to take a single example, the area of Rome is less than three times that of modern Florence, and was surely far less closely packed with houses. But the population of Florence was not long since estimated at less than 100,000. If the one was not more densely populated than the other, Rome in the time of Augustus or of Aurelian would hardly have exceeded the number of 300,000.

A similar comparison with some other crowded cities, such as Liverpool or Naples, would lead us to very similar results. Doubtless it is impossible to admit the precise conclusion to which it would seem so directly to lead. The explicit statements we have received of the numbers of the urban citizens, though their exact meaning still admits of question, making a fair allowance for the women and the slaves, are utterly irreconcilable with it. The recorded numbers of the actual dwellings, the *domus* and the *insulae*, at a later period, and the analogy also of some other great capitals of antiquity, points undoubtedly to a much larger population. If Dureau de la Malle has ventured to limit it, at its greatest height, to 500,000, Gibbon deemed 1,200,000 a fair but moderate estimate, while Bunsen raised it without hesitation to nearly two millions. But whatever we may say of other bases of calculation the measure of space is at least incontrovertible; for it must be distinctly understood that Rome was not surrounded with suburbs in the modern sense; the roads leading to the city were lined with several rows of sepulchres; the spaces between them may have contained a few suburban villas, but there is no mention, nor are there any traces, of towns or villages approaching to the walls. Of the density of the population of ancient Rome we possess no available measure.

Very closely packed it doubtless was, for the herds of slaves were stowed away regardless of all decency and comfort; vast numbers even of the poorer citizens lived in the streets all day, and lay down in the porches at night. On the whole, the computations alleged on all sides are little more than one guess against another; we may be content to strike a balance between the most plausible of several, and set our own figure at one million.

From the time of M. Aurelius the Roman world was visited by a succession of pestilences, which, it may be supposed, would fall most heavily on the areas of densest population. We may believe, however, that whatever loss Rome sustained from this cause during the century which followed, it would be compensated by the crowding into it of the impoverished people from the country beyond. The constant dole of corn by which the citizens were supported kept up the numbers at the capital, while it drained Italy and even the provinces. Whatever was the decline of the population of the empire at that time in progress, the imperial city would be the last spot to feel it. The first great blow that was struck at its numbers was the building of Constantinople. Many of the wealthiest families then quitted the Tiber for the Bosphorus, and carried with them their troops of clients and families of slaves. The purveyors to wealth migrated along with its possessors. The servile population had now ceased to draw recruits from successful frontier wars, and in the general decay of affluence to breed them became utterly unprofitable. Still the construction of splendid edifices continued even after the age of Severus. Aurelian's Temple of the Sun was of colossal proportions. The remains of the great basilica on the Velia attest the grandeur of the work of Maxentius completed by Constantine. The arch of Gallienus, and that of Constantine himself, decorated though it is with sculptures rifled from earlier monuments, shows that the tradition of victory and triumph still survived among the Romans of the declining empire. The walls, it is said, were completed by Probus. With these works, however, the additions to the ancient splendour of the city terminate, and when the career of progress was arrested the era of decay quickly followed. The gold became tarnished, the bronze rusted, the marble crumbled away. The Christian part of the inhabitants, which retained whatever life and vigour yet continued to exist, devoted all its interest to other objects. The people, becoming for the most part more and more wretched, timid, and hopeless of revival, allowed squalor and dirt to accumulate around them. When at rare intervals an emperor deigned to visit the ancient capital, prefects and

senators awoke from their torpor, and gave hasty orders for cleansing and repairing. Rome put on a brighter face for a moment to greet the arrival of Constantius, and extorted from him a tribute of wonder and delight, in token of which he made the gracious offering of an obelisk in the Circus. Honorius is extolled by Claudian for breathing fresh youth into the ancient city, an idea which is gracefully expressed by the image of the goddess resplendent in the brightness of her new helmet, shield, and javelin; but his merits seem to have been actually limited to some partial repairs of the walls. We have seen how this emperor's minister Stilicho set the first example of pillage, by carrying off the gilded plates on the doors of the Capitoline temple. The first assault of the barbarians quickly followed. The quarter nearest to the Salarian gate was burnt by Alaric; and Procopius, writing a century and a half later, bears witness that the ruins of the house of Sallust were not restored nor cleared away in his day. From this time, though the actual destruction effected by successive conquerors might not be very extensive, we may be sure that what was once damaged was never afterwards repaired. The depopulation of the city went on with increasing rapidity, and the people found themselves far too few for their ample lodgings. The Christians transformed many of the ancient buildings into churches, and constructed, no doubt, some new ones from the spoils of others. The capture of Rome by Genseric and again by Ricimer has already been shown to have contributed but little to the ruin of its edifices, and even the sack which it afterwards endured in the year 546 at the hands of Totila, though it swept with violence over some of its quarters, effected far less havoc than that which was daily made, for the sake of the materials, by the inhabitants themselves. The population of the city dwindled away with the loss of the means of maintaining it and repairing its natural decay. This it was that really caused the destruction of Rome, much more than flood or fire or the fury of the barbarians. The ruin which ensued from this cause was constant and irreparable, but it has been less observed because it was the progressive ruin of centuries. Many of the historic buildings of the empire, and perhaps of earlier ages, continued to stand erect, though shattered and defaced, long after all knowledge of their history had perished; some even now remain and exercise the inquiries and conjectures of the present generation. But, unfortunately, discovery and destruction seem by some strange fatality to be linked inseparably together. Our investigations at this moment

are producing many interesting results; but the very Government which is urging them on is at the same time permitting both disfigurement and damage to the relics which have hitherto been spared us. It is to be feared that we shall lose on the one hand at least as much as we can hope to gain on the other.

CHAPTER LXXX.

Reflections upon the history of Rome—Destruction of the ancient civilizations of Etruria and Carthage, and survival of that of Greece—Intercommunion of races secured by the Mediterranean Sea. I. Material results of the Roman dominion: Progress of the nations in wealth and culture; Africa, Spain, Gaul, Britain.—Peaceful submission of the Western nations—Ease and opulence of the East—Causes of gradual decline and depopulation: 1. Exhaustion caused by unceasing warfare on the frontiers. 2. Mischievous fiscal system of the Romans. 3. Fatal effects of slavery. The Commonwealth no less responsible for these evils than the Empire.—II. Moral results: 1. Preservation of Greek literature for after ages.—2. Protection from the ruin threatened by the dissolution of the Macedonian empire—The 'Peace of Rome' and the Laws of Rome. 3. Preparation for the reception of Christianity—Progress of moral principles and teaching—Establishment of the Christian standard of virtue.

THE final impression which has been thus left on our minds, after the long history which has been unfolded to us, is that produced by the fatal depopulation of the great imperial city. The career of conquering Rome has terminated in the spectacle of a vast mass of crumbling and deserted ruins, among which a mere handful of human beings, such as might be collected in one of our English county towns, is still scattered in dismay and languor, daily expecting its utter overthrow from the barbarians around it, deriving faint hope or consolation from its glimmering anticipations of a future ecclesiastical ascendancy. The prospect upon which we have been lately dwelling may lead us to a course of reflection with which these sketches of the ancient world may fitly come to their conclusion.

The Romans were the last of the nations of antiquity that entered upon the career of civilization. They were the successors of the early culture of the East, and of Egypt, of Etruria, of Carthage, and of Greece. They did not enter peacefully into the inheritance of the races which had thus lived and died before them. With the Etruscans, the Carthaginians, and the Greeks they had to struggle for the attainment of their objects, and to carry off the

culture of their opponents at the point of the sword. A large portion of this culture could not but perish in the struggle. The Romans effaced almost all the Etruscan civilization and the whole of the Carthaginian; both these were, no doubt, effete, but there remained still much of the Etruscan art and letters that deserved to be reverently cherished. Fortunately the genius of Greece was too strong for its conquerors, and after they had destroyed no small portion of Hellenic culture enough still remained to turn the tide of victory, and place Rome herself under moral subjection to her Grecian subjects.

The Mediterranean had been the common possession of all the advancing and improving nations of the early world. The Tyrians, the Carthaginians, and the Greeks had all made this sea the highway of their commerce, and had cultivated relations of mutual dealing with almost all the inhabitants of its coasts, from the mouth of the Nile to the Columns of Hercules. This perpetual contact with the sea had imparted, as it were, a recuperative force to communities which were from time to time exhausted by their incessant warfare one with another. The necessities of commerce had sufficed to overpower the jealousies and hatreds of opposing races, and after each successive era of political revolution the population of every city rushed again to the waters, and devoted all its energies to the interchange of its commodities, and the enjoyment or accumulation of wealth. The conquest of Greece by the Romans made little difference, perhaps, in the course of traffic among the borderers on this inland sea, except that it struck out some new channels for commerce, and brought the products of both its eastern and western shores to a common mart at Rome and Italy. Rhodes continued to be, as she had long been, the great emporium of the trade of the world. She had contented herself with the prosecution of maritime enterprise, and had made no effort to secure possessions on the continent beyond the narrow limits of her own little island. She enjoyed, in consequence, a happy immunity from the excitement and perils of warfare, and her freedom was at least nominally respected by Rome for many generations. The Roman conquerors became, however, culpably negligent in maintaining the police of the seas, and while prætors and imperators were intent upon the prosecution of their schemes of ambition the pirates of the Eastern Mediterranean preyed without restraint upon the commerce of dependent communities. When the eyes of the Senate were at last opened to the scandal, and still more to the manifest damage caused by the

ravages of these marauders, they set to work vigorously to control them. The 'piratic laurel' won by Pompeius was really the most honourable as it was the most beneficial work achieved by any victory of a Roman emperor.

There seems no reason to question the permanence as well as the greatness of this triumph. Henceforth we hear no complaints of insecurity by sea down to the later periods of the Roman sovereignty. The extension of peaceful traffic along all the coasts of the civilized world, which had been the aim of the greatest benefactors to human society for ages, was thus maintained by the power of the consolidated empire. No other force could have so maintained it. We must not overlook the beauty and harmony of this Providential dispensation, which allowed every civilized people of that period to exchange the produce of their industry, or at least of their soil and climate, one with another, to enjoy in common the fruits of nature and of arts, to cultivate the habits of mutual respect and consideration which necessarily spring up among men who are thrown continually into relations of amity and confidence. These are results of which political history can tell us little; it is the more incumbent upon us to direct our imagination towards them, if we would understand the social character of the ages before us.

I. We may collect, indeed, some evidence of the material results which were produced by this intercommunion of the ancient races, however far short it must fall of what we might have hoped and anticipated. The Romans, as, indeed, the Greeks before them, were singularly negligent of the science of public economy; though they kept elaborate registers of birth and age, of property and taxation, there seems to have been no head among them capable of generalizing the accumulating mass of data, and deducing therefrom social and administrative principles. It has been seen that we have no trustworthy information even as to the exact population of Rome itself; the numbers that dwelt in the various cities and the provinces throughout the empire lie open to the loosest conjecture. It is from inference rather than from any positive statements that we gather our impressions of the material condition of the Roman world at any period of its history. We feel little confidence in pointing to the apparent progress of certain portions of the empire with which to balance the admitted decline of others. The fact, indeed, is unquestioned, that from the period of the Hannibalian or the Social War the free population of Italy, south at least of the Rubicon, continued to dwindle. The number, indeed, of the slaves increased

to a very great extent; but we may conclude that this increase did not suffice to counterbalance the diminution, on the other hand, from the change which is known to have taken place in the occupation of the country from tillage to pasture. There is strong reason to believe that a similar process was going on during the same period throughout the countries which had been most productive, and accordingly most populous, at a previous epoch. Sicily, which had been, after her conquest by Rome, the regular granary of Italy, found herself superseded in this capacity by other provinces, and suffered a sensible decline both in her produce and her numbers. The Greek writers of the empire speak with dismay of the decline of continental Greece, where the free population perished wholesale, and a new servile immigration only partially replaced it. Many districts of Asia Minor suffered, no doubt, in the same way, though in these countries the great cities seem to have continued very generally to flourish, making up, probably, by their increasing commerce for the decay of production in their immediate neighbourhood. There seems, however, to be no such evidence of decline in Syria and Egypt. Palestine, down to the Jewish wars of Titus, was apparently as prosperous as at any earlier period. It was not till the war of Hadrian that she fell into the permanent depression from which she has never since recovered.

But now, if we turn our eyes westward, we can hardly mistake the signs that meet us of advancing wealth and multiplying resources. The supplies of grain from Egypt and the northern coast of Africa were furnished, not to Rome only, but to Italy generally, and to other countries also. The industry of this portion of the empire was never relaxed, and it reaped its natural fruit in long-continued prosperity. The provinces of Africa, Numidia, and Mauretania present us with a long list of cities, and the literary activity which pervaded them may speak for the general industry of their inhabitants. Their commerce extended far into the interior of the continent. The Romans of Africa seem to have known more of the Nile, and even of the Niger, in the third century than we had discovered at the commencement of the nineteenth. The vast range of territory that skirts the whole southern coast of the Mediterranean enjoyed a singular exemption from disturbance for many ages, and was free to make the most of the peculiar advantages it undoubtedly enjoyed both from its situation and its climate. Nor was the productive soil of the Iberian peninsula less favoured. The eastern coast, which was washed by the same central sea, abounded in cities, the

marts of a flourishing commerce, in which its corn and wool, its wines and oil, were exchanged for the products of every other region of the known world. Its corn enjoyed a demand from Italy and Greece in common with that of Africa. Its people, indeed, barely ventured to make sail on the Atlantic, and its northern and western seaboard thus threw away the natural advantages they might have secured. Few and petty were the cities of Iberia on this side; but wherever she came within reach of the Mediterranean she attracted vast gatherings of people together; her cities were numerous as well as populous; she multiplied her arts and luxuries, cultivated letters not less sedulously than the produce of the soil, and engendered schools of poets and orators not unworthy to rank with the highest names of the Roman literature she had adopted.

Nor, again, can less be predicated of Gaul. The Roman Provincia and the adjacent Narbonensis had first caught their zeal for arts and general industry from the Greeks who settled among them, few perhaps in number, but potent in genius. The south of Gaul proved a ready and soon a ripe scholar under their humanizing influences. The arrival of the Romans seems to have given an impulse to commerce and agriculture in these regions, and here, too, cities sprang up and multiplied, and in them all the arts and sciences of the Roman world effected a lodgment. The literary schools of Burdigala, of Arelas, of Narbo, and many other places could not fail to become centres of increasing and ever ramifying intelligence. The glimpses we obtain of social life in the heart of Gaul even in the fourth and fifth centuries, when most exposed to the destroying attacks of Franks and Burgundians, may still show us how much refinement must have flourished there at a happier period, which could not have existed unless surrounded by opulence and nursed by activity. During the fourth century there is unmistakeable evidence that the wealth and prosperity of Gaul continued to gravitate northward. The great cities of Paris, Trêves, Cologne, and many others become then first historical, as the homes of social activity and distinction, and no longer mere military stations. Our accounts of the state of Britain from its conquest downwards are but meagre. We know, however, that she, too, enjoyed under the empire an unbroken peace of three centuries, and that during that long period her opportunities of traffic with the Continent indefinitely increased. From the Tyne to the Exe the harbours of our island were thronged with vessels, employed in the transport of corn, wool, and hides, and 'beautiful' slaves to the ports of the

Rhine, the Scheldt, and the Seine. There can be no doubt that wealth followed in the wake of traffic, and population sprang up in the footsteps of wealth. The multitude of towns or cities which existed in the south of Britain, the network of roads by which they were united together, and the vestiges still to be discovered of native industry in coal, metals, and hardware, attest the constant advance of the British race in many branches of material cultivation.

The western provinces of the Roman empire must have presented, indeed, to the observer, at first sight, very much the same conditions of material prosperity as the vast tracts of land in both hemispheres which have been occupied in modern times by European colonization. They possessed the same boundless expanse of cultivable territory, traversed by navigable rivers, bordered by seas, wanting only the hand of man to cover them with the richest products, and to transfer these products from one to another. In America and Australia, indeed, the settler from a distance has been neither aided nor materially obstructed by the presence of indigenous races. The western provinces of the Roman empire, on the other hand, were for the most part occupied by a dense population which the conquerors did not attempt to clear before them.

It appears, however—and this is one of the most surprising features in the history before us—that after the first desperate resistance which the native races everywhere offered, and which, as in the case of Spain, was obstinately protracted for centuries, the Gauls, the Iberians, and the Britons all acquiesced, with no further struggle, in the domination of their invaders, hardly once organized a revolt against them, except when the conquerors themselves put arms into their hands, but threw themselves contentedly into their social embrace, receiving from them their laws and institutions, their manners, language, and culture. The attitude which the native races held towards the Roman settlers materially advanced the progress of their civilization instead of retarding it. These races were for the most part not only docile, but quick and ardent in learning; they abounded in industry and activity; they were instinct with life and animation; perhaps they already felt that they had a great career before them, and they seemed to be proud of their apparent destiny.

The provinces advanced and flourished for many generations. We must deeply regret that their uneventful annals have left us such slender materials for picturing to ourselves exactly what their state really was, and judging of the extent of the felicity which they seem

to have so generally enjoyed. What little we do learn of them is to be gathered rather from the few indications we have received of the life of Palestine or Asia than of the West; and these eastern regions were probably far less favoured than the western. It so happens that the only ancient writers who belonged themselves to the lower stratum of society, and represent to us the actual condition of the class from which they sprang, are those from whom we have received the books of the New Testament. It is from them, and from them only, that we gain an insight into the thoughts and ideas and manners of the common people. All our classical authors, on the other hand, were literary men writing for literary men, who knew of the people below them at second-hand only.

Assuredly the writers of the New Testament leave upon us the impression that there was a wider diffusion of material ease and contentment, with a juster apprehension of spiritual principles, among the lower class of their country than we seem to meet with elsewhere; that the control of the Roman officials relieved their subjects from many of the worst effects of Oriental caprice and cruelty; that the enlightened wisdom of the West was beneficently employed in cherishing the spontaneous civility of the East. We too, as Englishmen, the conquerors and rulers of Hindostan, may learn, perhaps, some lessons from the Romans in Asia; we may reflect, at least, how difficult it is to appreciate the ideas of alien and distant races, and may judge the defects of their administration with the same indulgence which we shall require ourselves at the hands of posterity. The crime, the unpardonable crime, of Rome—but it was the crime of the Roman people, not of the Empire only—was the brutal barbarity with which she trampled down this flower of civilization in Palestine when she was called upon to suppress an untoward rebellion.

We have, indeed, no such indications of moral and material enjoyment in the Western provinces; but we may, as we have seen, to a certain extent, infer them. On the other hand, it is but too clear that throughout the world the decline of the empire was marked by gradual impoverishment, depopulation, and misery. For these results, which so fatally belie the fair appearances above noted, many causes may be assigned, and certainly many combined together to effect them: 1. The unceasing warfare against the barbarians on the frontiers must have caused a constant drain both of men and money, withdrawing them both from the profitable employments of peace. Our writers may be using too rhetorical language

when they repeatedly inform us that the whole province of Gaul was 'exhausted' by the requisitions made upon it for the armies and garrisons on the Rhine; but we may remember, as an apt illustration, how the great empire of Russia was prostrated by her efforts to carry on a single campaign in the remote Crimea. Exertions not much less harassing were required for centuries along the whole course of the Rhine and Danube. Nor are these sacrifices to be charged to the policy of the empire. It was the barbarians, not the Romans, who were in almost all cases the aggressors. The peace of Rome on the frontier was necessarily an armed peace.

2. The fiscal system of the emperors, as of the Senate before them, never advanced beyond the crudest stage of political economy. Its main supports were the poll-tax and the salt-tax; taxation of the individual, as the nearest and most accessible of objects; taxation of the necessities of life, as the objects that can least escape the imposed burden; taxation in the shape of tolls at every city gate, and customs dues at every port, constantly operating against the freedom of exchange which the roads, the rivers, and the seas of a worldwide empire would naturally have thrown absolutely open. It was the civil as well as the fiscal policy of the central government to obstruct the intercommunication of its provinces and cities. Rome reached all her outposts by the most convenient roads; but for the most part she denied them the use of cross-roads; certainly she gave no facilities for constructing them among themselves. She feared their seeing too much of one another, and knowing how near they were one to another. Practically the exchange of commodities was very commonly restricted to the immediate localities in which they were produced. Such certainly would be the case as the general wealth and population of the country declined. Trades were jealously protected by imperial and municipal prohibitions. Further, the rough and arbitrary way in which the contributions of the subject were collected, by making the owners of property in each neighbourhood personally answerable for them, discouraged the employment of capital. The produce of the soil lay at the mercy of the taxgatherer, and was constantly liable to be swept off from it to discharge the debt, not of the landowner himself, but of the community which he was held to represent. Taxation by towns and villages is the readiest fiscal instrument in the hands of the state, but it is the most injurious to property and distressing to its possessors. The history of Roman jurisprudence presents us with a fearful picture of the fatal effects

of the system of imperial finance; a system, however, which has been common to many other empires besides the Roman.

3. There remains, indeed, a wider cause of the general impoverishment and decline of the Roman world in the system of personal slavery, which was accepted as a necessary condition of social life by all the polities of antiquity. Slavery was, doubtless, in its origin an advance upon the primitive law of barbarism, according to which the life of the vanquished was forfeited to his conqueror. Much blood was spared, and much work was obtained in exchange for it, by a social revolution which came with a show, perhaps, of beneficence as well as of profit. But we need not stop to urge what all experience has fully established, the fact that slavery is ultimately fatal to labour, fatal to the wealth and the population of communities. There is much allowance to be made, perhaps, for exaggeration in the statements we have received of the decline of numbers in Greece and Italy, even during the most brilliant periods of antiquity. No doubt the freemen disappeared rapidly; but their place might long continue to be supplied by a constant importation of slaves; and the produce of their fertile soil might actually decrease, not from the lack of hands to cultivate it, so much as from the wasteful habits of slave labour, as compared with that of freemen. But the slave population which thus replaced the free was not itself reproductive. Many causes, which we need not pause to consider, seemed to strike the bondman with barrenness. Slavery deprived him of half his manhood. His numbers could only be maintained by fresh supplies from a distance, for the breeding of slaves was eminently costly. As long as Rome continued to prevail over the barbarians she could thus renew her slave population readily and cheaply. But the time came when her tide of conquest first stayed at the full, and then began to ebb more and more rapidly. She became weaker in resources of all kinds, and, above all, weaker in the numbers of bold and vigorous freemen who had constituted the true lifeblood of her system. She flung herself upon the resource of emancipation, but not till it was too late. It seems probable that in the third and fourth centuries the 'colonus,' or predial labourer, had to a great extent superseded the bondman who had worked on the farm in chains at an earlier period. But the slave had been released from his bonds only to fall under the more grinding tyranny of the tax-gatherer, if he escaped from the military conscription which carried off so many thousands to the garrisons on the frontiers, or condemned them to serve in the armies of rebels and pretenders.

Such were the causes of the decline of the empire, in addition to the inevitable effects of luxury and vice, which continued to act and react upon one another through many succeeding generations. But for none of them is the empire itself directly responsible. They were all more or less in operation long before the establishment of the imperial government; they acted perhaps as freely and as fatally, though their effects were as yet only the germ, under the rule of the Scipios and the Gracchi, as under the rule of the Cæsars and their descendants. If we will impartially compare the material state of the world under the Romans, from Spain to Syria, as nearly as we can trace it, with its state at any other known period of antiquity, we can hardly fail to acknowledge that it was on the whole advanced and ameliorated. Against the marked decline of Greece and Italy, which fill perhaps the greatest space in our field of vision, must be set the improvement, not less real though less obvious, which prevailed for many years throughout the Western provinces, while in the East the condition of mankind may be regarded as at least for the most part stationary.

II. But in estimating the effect of the Roman conquests upon the happiness and prosperity of the nations we must reserve the last place for moral considerations. The Romans who first crossed the Adriatic, and gradually advanced to the Euphrates and the Nile, brought with them the narrow ideas of an Italian municipality, but they found themselves confronted with the cosmopolitan principles of a wide and in some respects a homogeneous empire. The form and spirit of Hellenic culture had long before permeated, along with Hellenic commerce, every province of the great Macedonian dominions, and now the conquests they had made in the East were speedily repeated in the West also. Rome accepted the civilization of Greece in the place of her own antique barbarism, and whatever she accepted she had fortunately the power to extend and maintain. The Greek ideas which must have perished in the bitter conflicts of the various dynasties of the East were preserved for centuries by the controlling power of the great Western conquerors. Letters were saved, law was humanized and diffused; religion was subjected to the modifications of a purer morality and a higher reason, and harmony was established between the precepts of the Christian Gospel and the dictates of the soundest philosophy. To this day we enjoy the consequences in all these particulars of the conquest of the world by the Romans.

1. There seems no reason to suppose that the rude efforts of

Rome and Italy could have produced any higher literature than Gaul or Britain, had they not been assisted by the teaching of the Greeks whom they had conquered. The aptitude they evinced for imbibing the lessons of the slaves they had accepted as their masters is perhaps an unique phenomenon in literary history. The vigour of their earliest imitations of Grecian models in epic, dramatic, and philosophic poetry is surprising. They seem, indeed, to have too hastily adopted for their models the Greek writers nearest to their own age in date, rather than to have gone back to the purest sources of the Grecian inspiration. Plautus and Terence took for their type the product of the later Athenian comedy; Catullus and Lucretius drew their inspiration rather from the schools of Greece than from her native hills and fountains. The Augustan age of Rome introduced a purer taste in imitation, but Virgil and Horace were still imitators rather than original masters. Their great merit in their own age consisted in familiarizing the people of the West with the spirit of the highest Grecian literature. For ourselves we must acknowledge that in all probability we owe the preservation of the 'Iliad' and 'Odyssey' entirely to the publication of the 'Æneid,' which kept the fame of its prototypes alive through all the centuries that intervened to the revival of letters. The charming lyrics of Horace have not availed to render us the same service in regard to Alcæus and Sappho, but how different would our civilization at this moment be had we never known our Homer! But, as with Homer, so generally with the whole range of Grecian writings—the conquest of the world by Rome saved it from annihilation, and preserved it, together with the arts and sciences of Greece, as the noblest heritage of man for a long succession of ages.

2. The Roman conquest relieved the nations from the interminable dissensions which threatened to overwhelm them on the dissolution of the Macedonian monarchy. The wars of 'the kites and crows' were succeeded by a period of internal tranquillity more extensive, more durable, and more profound than any other in human annals. The 'Pax Romana' stands out as an unique phenomenon in history. It was consolidated partly by the power of the Roman arms in repelling aggression from without; but not less perhaps by the constraining pressure of Roman law, which made every subject of the worldwide dominion know his own place, and confine himself within it. The Roman law was an active and living principle. It was always open to receive new impressions, and anxious for improvement and development. It set before itself ideas of humanity and

justice which it aimed at accomplishing. It trained multitudes of keen intellects in the contemplation and pursuit of broad and noble ends. It constituted in itself a wide and liberal education, and familiarized its students first with the highest philosophy, and afterwards with the purest religion of the period. Nor was it unsuccessful in the attainment of its practical objects. It generated a spirit of confidence in the government, of obedience to command, of general contentment, and gave scope to the cultivation of the domestic affections. The records of Roman society, imperfect as they are, present us with many pictures of mental serenity, which indicate living springs of purity and goodness, and may fairly be set against the most flagrant examples of heathen depravity. It had been, indeed, the constant policy of the emperors to modify the harsh principles of the old municipal law of Rome, and render it a fitting instrument for the government of a world-wide empire. Ideas of universal equity replaced, under their patronage, the narrow selfishness of the Twelve Tables. From the time of Augustus at least the subjects of the conquering city received a long and patient training in the philosophy of jurisprudence. While the empire was tottering to its fall, they still cherished a conviction of the permanence of the principles on which its social fabric had so long been maintained. At the end of the fourth century the poet Rutilius could boldly prophesy that in her legal institutions Rome should yet be immortal. In this faith her jurists still persevered, working bravely for an unknown future. When the Theodosian Code or Digest was at last promulgated by the third Valentinian, Africa was already occupied by the Vandals, Gaul and Spain had been seized by the Visigoths and Burgundians, the Franks, the Saxons, the Ostrogoths, and the Lombards were already hovering in the rear; but preparation had thus been made for placing all these barbarians under civil restraints, and to these restraints they for the most part consented to submit.

3. The Roman law was a noble legacy, but the dying community had yet another and a nobler one to bequeath. The moral culture of pagan antiquity issued in the general reception of the Christian religion. No result of the great Macedonian conquests had been more marked than the impulse they gave to the advancement of moral philosophy. When the ancient republics of Greece had become merged in one enormous empire the narrow ideas of patriotic duty, by which they had fostered their intense municipalism, were rapidly obliterated. The exclusive spirit which

had kept every race, every tribe, almost every clan apart, gave way to wider sympathies. A more liberal morality convinced mankind of their common origin, their reciprocal duties and equal rights. The Roman empire laid hold upon this awakened sensibility, and established as a legal principle the equality of the Greek with the Roman, and with every other people over whom the Greek and Roman ideas predominated in common. The distinction, indeed, between bond and free still remained. This great and fatal blot on ancient society has hardly yet been effaced even throughout the modern. Slavery became, indeed, modified with the advancing humanity of Roman civilization, but as a social institution neither heathen sage nor Christian saint seems to have dreamed that it could possibly be abolished. Perhaps both Christian and heathen was equally unconscious of its iniquity, or made similar excuses for it. There still remained, however, a wide field for the teaching of the heathen moralists of the imperial era, which they cultivated with assiduity and success. The Stoics, and more particularly the Stoical schools of the empire, inculcated noble lessons of virtue with a zeal almost fanatical. The treatises of Seneca may be taken as a type of Roman philosophical teaching, and these were mainly confined to the inculcation of practical morality. Marcus Aurelius not only gave lessons in morality, but practised the lessons he prescribed. Among the Greeks and Orientals more attention was still paid to purely metaphysical speculation; but Plutarch, Dion, and Apollonius of Tyana, together doubtless with many others, distinguished themselves as teachers of ethics. With the empire, indeed, commenced an era not of teaching only, but of preaching. The Christian writers and orators may have led the way. The missionaries of the Gospel were not content to preach in their own churches or conventicles; they went about haranguing on the beauty of holiness, and converting men to virtue as well as to faith in Christ. The heathen moralists followed in their wake, and were perhaps powerfully influenced by their example. The second, and still more the third century of our era was distinguished for the earnestness of its moral and spiritual exhortations. Little as the Christian faith was openly recognised, we cannot doubt that its influence was already widely felt. The example of Christian endurance, still more perhaps of Christian charity and obedience, made a deep though silent impression upon a selfish society. The world had been strongly leavened with sympathy for the virtues of the disciples even before the time arrived when its sympathy could be confessed without incurring the

penalties or disabilities which so long attached to it. Constantine found the Christians still a minority in numbers; but they plainly possessed the promise of the future. The instinct of the greatest of their converts recognised in their Church the only sure foundation for a strong and undivided empire. Tertullian and Origen had already shown that the intellectual power of the age had migrated to the camp of the new believers. Augustine and Chrysostom, Lactantius and Jerome, handed on the torch of Christian genius. We may estimate the intellectual progress of the Roman world from these genuine descendants of the greatest sages of antiquity. A temperate believer, wedded to no ecclesiastical theory, may be content to insist upon the fact that the Church did undoubtedly generate a morality more widely diffused and more highly cultivated than any Pagan system that preceded or accompanied it; but its success is still more conspicuous in the transcendent merit of its saints and martyrs, its moral and spiritual leaders. Even were the general level of Christian practice not more exalted than the Pagan, it must be confessed that more individuals have risen above it, and have risen to a much greater eminence. Such, then, is the point at which Roman society ultimately arrived. The history we have traversed culminates in the establishment of the Christian Church, and therewith of a higher standard of the noblest of human graces. In recounting a portion of mere human annals we are required to look no further. The Roman Empire has not been founded in vain, if it has, under Providential guidance, rendered this result possible. Its career has been darkened no doubt by a vast amount of crime and outrage; it has stifled some vital ideas, and trampled on many generous aspirations; sad and painful it has often been to struggle through the record of its oppressions and sensual corruptions; but the gloom has not been unrelieved by gleams of intelligence and virtue, and it leaves us at the last with a steady light of cheerful hope before us. We can discern, if we will not shut our eyes, that the germ of a truer civilization has been cast into the ground, has taken root, has actually sprung up and blossomed.

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